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The Nation.
September 6, 1980 $1

EDITORIAL

NUCLEAR POLITICS

The Presidential season was launched this year well before Labor Day, with a bang—full-scale nuclear exchange between the two main candidates. The question is, will the fallout linger on? The Republicans' pre-emptive strike—a call for nuclear superiority over the Soviet Union—drew a countervailing response from the Carter Administration—a superbomb known as Presidential Directive 59, which announced offhandedly that limited nuclear war was in the U.S. repertory. Naturally, President Jimmy Carter told the American Legion convention, this "logical and evolutionary improvement of our nation's defense capability . . . will contribute to the prevention of nuclear conflict."

Ronald Reagan's highly similar version of the peace-through-strength theme had been sounded for the umpteenth time the previous week before a suitably martial audience of Veterans of Foreign Wars. He also sought to knock out the Democrats' Reagan-wants-an-arms-race capability with this shot: "We're already in an arms race, but only the Soviet Union is racing." That triggered an answering salvo from Carter: "If an unlimited nuclear arms race should be forced upon us, we will compete and compete successfully." Shortly thereafter, the ever-accommodating Secretary of Political Defense launched a secret weapon—the "invisible" bomber.

Now for the fallout. Directive 59, if it was more than rhetoric, signaled a step toward a first-strike strategy predicated upon the MX. As for Reagan's pronouncements, he had told the world that, if he were President, we would not negotiate arms reduction until we had the capability of knocking out the Russians' land-based missiles—nuclear superiority, in other words—and he wants it faster than an MX. All this reaffirms the old truism that in a nuclear exchange, political or otherwise, nobody wins.

TWO-PARTY MONOPOLY
Richard J. Walton

BLUES FOR MR. BOTHA
James North

THE '79 GAS CRISIS: WHAT THE D.O.J. FORGOT
Peter Achnacarry

PILGRIMAGE TO TAOS
Frederick Turner

PENNY LERNOUX'S PEOPLE
Peter Marin

THE GLOBAL DATA BANK

INFORMATION—THE NEWEST RESOURCE

ANTHONY SMITH

A number of international bodies, notably the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, have become the forum for a growing controversy over freedom of the press since the middle of the decade. The South (developing nations) has accused the North (industrialized nations) of cultural domination through its control of the major news-collecting apparatus of the world, through the unstinted flow of its cultural products across the world and through the financial domination of its advertising agencies, its international newspaper chains and its newsprint companies. It allegedly dominates the electromagnetic spectrum on which radio and television depend, while the sheer swamping effect of the apparatus of the Western mass media dominates the culture of the new elite populations of the Third World and represses its traditional cultures. Most of all, the South has complained of the fact that the four major wire services or news agencies of the world (Reuters, Agence France Presse, United Press International and the Associated Press) belong to three nations but supply 90 percent of all of the international news that passes into the newsrooms of the entire globe.

The adherence to a privately owned and "free" press is indeed perhaps the one fully shared *self-defining* belief of the democratic West. It is an intellectual doctrine but also a business doctrine. But the developing societies argue that the machinery of government is so frail and so unstable that the constant winds of change generated by a free press would be overwhelming to political and social stability. The

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LETTERS.

A CAREY McWILLIAMS ACT

North Hollywood, Calif.

We were sorry we could not be with our friends at the memorial service to pay homage to one of America's greatest minds—Carey McWilliams. We think he would approve of doubling *The Nation*'s circulation. The formula is simple. If each of us sends a subscription to a friend—presto chango, we shall have accomplished a true Carey McWilliams act to strengthen democracy. *Hack and Elinor Glenn*

ONLY OPPRESSORS CENSOR

San Jose, Calif.

Aryeh Neier is worried ["Expurgating the First Amendment," *The Nation*, June 21] that "victims of oppression take up the call for censorship."

Victims of oppression are not taking up the call for censorship. The oppressors are the censors: positively, in the picture that they have drawn of black people, Jewish people, women and colored peoples in general; negatively, in the omissions of the realities concerning such peoples. Since they are the oppressors, they have the dominating power. A way of fighting against that power and that oppression is to challenge directly their depictions and to challenge also their "right" to present such depictions and to act on the basis of their libels. Those actions constitute the reality of racism, sexism and chauvinism; their actions constitute awful offenses against the lives and well-being of millions.

Neier writes as though experiences are unknown; as though it is not known that racist propaganda against black people accompanies and justifies and induces racist practices; as though the world did not experience the results of Hitlerism and *therefore* provided in the Potsdam Treaty that the ideas of Hitlerism were not to be propagated in Germany and that newspapers, symbols and parties promulgating Hitlerism were *forbidden*; as though he does not know that states as "respectable" as France and Holland have enacted laws forbidding racist propaganda and that the United Nations in several resolutions has urged that all states forbid such propaganda.

The struggle to illegalize propaganda that dehumanizes categories of people is just in itself and is vital in the organizational efforts to thwart exploitative and oppressive social systems. *Herbert Aptheker*

NEIER PROVES POINT

New York City

Herbert Aptheker writes, "The struggle to illegalize propaganda that dehumanizes categories of people is just," yet insists that those engaged in this struggle "are not taking up the call for censorship." It would be difficult to find a better illustration of the point I made in my article that the "new censors want to suppress books, magazines and films without the onus of being labeled as censors." Given Aptheker's attempt to distort the meaning of words, I would not care to entrust him with deciding what should be prohibited because it is racist, sexist, or chauvinist or because of "omissions of the realities" about the oppressed. Nor would I entrust anyone else with such a task, just one of the reasons I oppose all censorship. *Aryeh Neier*

TWENTY-YEAR TOP DOG

New York City

Peter Winn ["Is the Cuban Revolution in Trouble?," *The Nation*, June 7] reports on recent attempts in Cuba, particularly by Raul Castro, to combat the chronic problems of inefficient management, overbearing bureaucracy and low labor productivity. These problems are reported as being related to the abuse of prerogatives and to the high salaries of government officials. Winn opines that if Cuba can reverse the drift toward corruption of power and the creation of a privileged group of bureaucrats, then the current crisis might prove a blessing in disguise for the Cuban revolution.

No mention is made of the significance of the example of one man, Fidel Castro, remaining as top dog for more than twenty years. What perquisite of power can match that? Who will willingly give up lesser prerogatives in the face of such an example? What institution can be said to be "of the people" when at the top of the pyramid of power one man has sat for twenty years? Then it is his brother who attacks those officials who protect their perks and those workers who resist work norms?

Strange that so much of the sympathetic analysis of the problems faced by "socialist" societies ignores the inevitable and all too human reaction of the masses who come to appreciate how well their revolution serves the power and status needs of their leaders. I forget which revolutionary it was who said something like, "What's good for Charles E. Wilson is good for the country." *Lloyd McAylay*

WINN REPLIES

New York City

Lloyd McAulay asserts that Fidel Castro's two-decade tenure as Cuba's "top dog" is the reason that bureaucrats are taking advantage of their positions and workers are maintaining productivity at a low level. He may prove to be right, but I know of no evidence to support his speculation. In my article I tried to focus on what we do know: that these problems are chronic, have been exacerbated by policies pursued during the past decade and have reached a level and generated a popular response that have motivated such top Cuban leaders as Raul Castro (I could as easily have quoted others on this theme) to make strong statements about them and the government to take serious steps to deal with them.

Whether or not Cuba is a democracy—McAulay's other question—is an older and longer debate, which I did not address in my article and could not do justice to here. But the length of Castro's time in power (which so bothers McAulay) would seem a poor basis for answering it. Franklin Roosevelt would have been "top dog" for sixteen years had he lived to complete his fourth term in office. Would McAulay argue that F.D.R.'s Presidency was therefore not "of the people"—as opposed to Richard Nixon's briefer stay in the White House? *Peter Winn*

CORRECTION

Contrary to an assertion in "Convention '80" [editorial, *The Nation*, August 16-23], Jimmy Carter did refer briefly to the American hostages in Iran during his acceptance speech.

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EDITORIALS.

Workers Arisen

The great upheaval in Poland is a heart-stopping reminder of the real powerlessness of the Powers. The more powerful the Power, the more restraints there must be on it. So far they have worked. We owe part of the absence of fiddling with the Polish crisis by those powers called Super to the splitting of the atom. The old term "tinderbox," applied in the last century to the Balkans, Belgium, etc., simply won't do for the situation in Poland—the ugly nukes on both sides have mega-dated that innocent sort of explosion.

The Soviet Union, of course, has a far greater practical stake in the outcome of the Polish workers' revolt than does the United States. Nothing less than the breakup of the Warsaw Pact and the crumbling of their Communist state haunts the Kremlin's nightmares. Moscow could not, and will not, allow that to happen. But the problem for the U.S.S.R. is how to contain the explosive mixture of political and economic problems in Poland without taking the desperate step of direct military intervention to crush the dissent. All the signs are that the Soviet leadership knows that this final recourse would lead to resistance on the scale of a civil war. After all, it was only sixty years ago that the Poles beat back a Russian army outside Warsaw, and Russo-Polish history is littered with successful and unsuccessful battles by Poland to resist its big neighbor's ambitions.

Compared to what is happening in Poland now, and what could occur, the suppression of the 1968 Czechoslovakian attempt to loosen the Soviet bonds and the Hungarian upheaval in 1956 were easy problems for Moscow to solve. Everyone involved in the Polish situation of 1980 knows that this is the real thing, the big threat to the whole Communist system, and therefore the stakes are the highest.

As for the West, it has accelerated its economic involvement in Eastern Europe—especially in Poland—and has made loans on an enormous scale. Poland owes the West's money men about $20 billion, merely half of which is up for repayment this year. Thus, the United States and its capitalist allies also have a huge stake in peace and productivity in Poland, one that has crassly little to do either with geopolitics or more democracy for the Polish people.

Given what we have to win or lose in Poland, financially and ideologically, so to speak, it is perhaps noteworthy that

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American political figures have so far managed to keep their traps shut. The Republican Presidential duo did their diplomatic comedy act about the "two" Chinas, thank heaven, instead of about Gdansk and Gdynia. Can we count on the persistence of that blessed mumness from a ticket that courts the "ethnic" vote, that implicitly needles Carter on his "softness" toward you-know-what, and that does not shrink from seeking "superiority" in an arms race with the Russians? It seems unlikely.

For the moment, all that Americans can do is thank their stars that the politicians are also frightened by the volatility of the Soviet Union's western border. Trade union members—and those struggling to organize (for the right to unionize is sometimes thwarted over here too)—can, this post-Labor Day week, extend the hand of solidarity to the striking Polish workers, many of whose predecessors in the troubles of 1976, 1970, 1968 and 1956 suffered awful reprisals. And they can also pray that the Soviet record of not intervening with force in the past struggles for more freedom in its most vital and dangerous satellite will remain unbroken at least through 1980.

Red-Scare Tactic

State Department charges that the recent coup in Bolivia was financed by the local cocaine Mafia with Argentine complicity reflect a rare—and welcome—recognition of political reality in Latin America. The department's contention that the right-wing *putsch* had "nothing to do with ideology but was a pure and simple case of military greed" applies equally to the motivating forces of a number of Latin American military governments, including that of Brazil, which also indirectly supported the Bolivian coup. These regimes have long used ar anti-Communist pose as cover for widespread corruption.

The Somoza family in Nicaragua was perhaps the best publicized example of a dictatorship that plundered a country in the name of anti-Communism. But there are plenty of other examples around, starting with Paraguay's Gen. Alfredo Stroessner, who treats any criticism of the Government-protected smuggling, drug and extortion rackets as "Communist subversion." As one Western diplomat remarked, "Stroessner hasn't the faintest concept of what Marxism is"—a charge supported by the Paraguayan Government's solemn claim that both Pope John Paul II and President Jimmy Carter are Communists and that Carter's re-election would be the result of Russian influence.

There are good reasons for such doubletalk. As noted in a recent report on Paraguay by the International League for Human Rights: "By definition anyone who opposes or criticizes the Government is an enemy of the republic. Even those who don't declare themselves are suspect, for they too may secretly sympathize with the Marxist enemy. Indeed, considering the nature of the struggle there can only be two groups: on one side the Stroessner regime and [its] Colorado Party which in combination serve progress, stability and democracy and, on the other side, the Marxists and their fellow travelers and dupes who stand for subversion, revolution and Communist dictatorship."

Brazil's military regime follows the same self-serving philosophy, embellished with geopolitical jargon known as the "Doctrine of National Security." Government corruption is only slightly less blatant than in Paraguay, with widespread bribery and the use of public office for personal gain, as, for example, in the Amazon, where some of the largest landowners happen to be colonels and governors. Military perks include expense accounts, chauffeur-driven limousines, vacation chalets and Government-paid butlers. Among the arguments most frequently cited against a return to democracy in Brazil is that it would cost a wealthy cadre of military officials the fat salaries they draw from state agencies and private industry.

Recent financial scandals in Argentina and Chile underline the connection between right-wing rhetoric anc crookedness. In Chile, the assassination of Col. Roger Vergara, an army intelligence officer, has been linked to a $100 million tax fraud involving former members of DINA, the secret police. Gen. Manuel Contreras, the retired DINA chief who helped plan the murder in Washington of former Foreign Minister Orlando Letelier, is also allegedly connected to the scandal through business dealings with Eduardo Romero, who was imprisoned on charges of tax fraud. Evidence suggests that in at least two cases documents used in fake tax returns belonged to political prisoners who disappeared after their arrest by DINA.

Several hundred people were rounded up by parapolice squads in the wake of Vergara's assassination, which was made to look like a left-wing plot. But subsequent investigations tended to confirm that he was the victim of internal conflicts in the Government and the intelligence service between rival gangs supporting Contreras and his replacement, Gen. Odlanier Mena. General Mena said he did not believe Vergara's murder was the work of the left, an opinion shared by Gen. Ernesto Baeza, who is in charge of the police investigation of the tax fraud. For one thing, the car used by Vergara's assassins came from the garage of the presidential palace. Twenty police officers were later jailed after it was shown that they were responsible for the illegal arrest and torture of dozens of Chileans following Vergara's murder.

The collapse of the four largest banks in Argentina proved similarly embarrassing to the Argentine regime when it became public that the banks' connections in high-level military circles had enabled them to circumvent banking regulations to build highly speculative paper castles. The Banco de Intercambio Regional (B.I.R.) mushroomed into the largest bank in Argentina almost overnight thanks to such gimmicks as giving credit accounts to newly promoted colonels. Rafael Trozzo, the bank's founder, was a good friend of Navy commander Emilio Massera.

The Honduran regime in Central America is led by Gen. Policarpo Paz García, head of the armed forces, and Police Chief Amilcar Zelaya, who have been linked to a series of drug and bribery scandals. According to the daily *La Prensa*, Paz García is co-owner of a large ranch northeast of

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Tegúcigalpa with the recognized chief of the Honduran Mafia, Ramón Matta Ballesteros. The chief of the Honduran branch of Interpol, Lieut. Juan Angel Barahona, was arrested for slander after charging that top-ranking officers connected with the Mafia were turning Honduras into a waystation for the U.S.-bound cocaine traffic.

None of this is to say that the Latin American military holds a monopoly on corruption. Bribery is widespread in the civilian Governments of Mexico, Venezuela and Colombia. But rarely is there an attempt to cover such crimes with an anti-Communist blanket. Only the military regimes indulge in this farce, and at far greater cost to the civilian population than the squandering of tax money: In Argentina alone, an estimated 15,000 people have been murdered since the military seized power in 1976.

The State Department's response to Bolivia's "cocaine coup" is a necessary first step in refocusing the debate on human rights, which too often has been clouded by false ideological issues. While there are some who may argue that the repression of human rights is an unpleasant but necessary corollary of the fight against Marxism in Latin America, no one can possibly excuse torture, extortion and murder by thieves and drug runners, unless they themselves belong to such Mafias.

Crying Wolf

Louis Wolf is an editor of *Covert Action Information Bulletin,* a journal that opposes American interference in the affairs of other nations. Wolf, a private citizen who has never had access to classified information, has infuriated the intelligence establishment by publishing the names of covert American intelligence agents that he has discovered by analyzing unclassified information derived from unclassified sources. Now Congress wants "to put him away," in the words of Senator John Chafee, the Rhode Island Republican.

The intelligence committees of both houses have reported out bills (H.R. 5615, S. 2216) that would not merely have a chilling effect; they would freeze solid much reporting on intelligence activities. The House Subcommittee on Civil and Constitutional Rights deleted the most dangerous provision (subcommittee chairman Don Edwards called it "clearly unconstitutional"), but the full House seems intent on giving the intelligence agencies whatever they want.

"Whoever," the contested provision of the Senate bill states (the House version is similar),

> in the course of a pattern of activities intended to identify and expose covert agents and with reason to believe that such activities would impair or impede the foreign intelligence activities of the United States, discloses any information that identifies an individual as a covert agent to any individual not authorized to receive classified information, knowing that the information disclosed so identifies such individual and that the United States is taking affirmative measures to conceal such individual's classified intelligence relationship to the United States, shall be fined not more than $15,000 or imprisoned not more than three years, or both.

How would the intent of journalists be determined? Would a series of critical articles on the Central Intelligence Agency in a journal like *The Nation* be considered "a pattern of activities," and would the C.I.A.'s stated displeasure constitute "reason to believe" those articles would "impair or impede" intelligence activities? If this bill had been law, journalists would not have been able to report the C.I.A. connections of Watergate burglars. *The Washington Post* could not have reported that King Hussein received C.I.A. assistance. If it becomes law, a historian could not publish information that would reveal the identities of individuals who have assisted the C.I.A. in the past, even if that information were derived from unclassified sources in university archives. In addition, this law would make it illegal to reveal to a university, church, or political group that any of its members were undercover C.I.A. or Federal Bureau of Investigation agents or sources, thus making it impossible for those organizations to police their own ranks.

Since the information to be suppressed is unclassified and its purveyors are private citizens, in passing this law Congress would be asserting its right to ban the disclosure or publication of any information that would "impair or impede" intelligence activities, and if it has that right it could ban other information as well. Congress, in short, would become an official censor.

Even the Burger Court has not gone this far in disregarding the First Amendment, but Congress is well on the way. The growing anti-libertarian consensus in Congress was perhaps best expressed by Republican Vice Presidential also-ran Senator Richard Lugar: "I would be willing to take some risks with regard to all of the apparatus and protections we have set up, however meritorious they may have been in an absolutist civil rights situation. I don't think on a continuum we are going to be able to have both an ongoing intelligence capability and a totality of civil rights protection." The Bill of Rights, it seems, has been relegated to the past tense.

In less lugubrious language, Thomas Jefferson said the same thing about slavery 160 years ago: "We have a wolf by the ears," he wrote Albert Gallatin in 1820, "and we can neither hold him, nor safely let him go. Justice is in one scale, and self-preservation in the other." But Jefferson was wrong: justice and self-preservation were in the same scale then, as they are now when Congress has another Wolf by the ears. Lugar is no Jefferson, but his dilemma is the same, and equally false. We should have learned by now that American liberties are threatened more by our panicky efforts to defend national security than by external enemies, that the exercise of our civil liberties provides more real protection than the short-term security their curtailment often seems to promise.

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VARIATIONS

CALVIN TRILLIN

The possibility that the Presidential election may be thrown into the House of Representatives has naturally stirred interest in the question of what sort of President Calvin Trillin would make. An examination of his record and his public statements over the years indicates that both his supporters and his critics might tend to summarize their answer to that question with the phrase "simply disastrous." The fact that a widespread assessment of that nature has not resulted in the dismissal of Mr. Trillin's candidacy has been used by some political analysts as an indication that voter dissatisfaction over the choice of Presidential candidates may run deeper than previously estimated.

There is relatively little on the public record concerning Mr. Trillin, since he has never held public office (his preference for being addressed as Governor apparently dates from a summer-camp sketch in which he played Governor Thomas E. Dewey of New York). The administrative experience suggested by the description of himself he has offered ("Administrator, Educator, Citizen-Soldier, Conspicuous Consumer") was not gathered in a governmental executive office but on the student council of Southwest High School, in Kansas City, Missouri. Although those who served on the student council with Mr. Trillin in those years tend to respond to questions about his performance in a way that suggests he was not the dominant force (the most widespread comment was "Who'd you say?"), there is simply not enough documentary evidence to enable anyone to confirm or deny the claim made for Mr. Trillin concerning his role in the council—that "he really turned it around" or that "he got it moving again."

To some extent, the same lack of documentation inhibits inquiry into Mr. Trillin's experience as an educator—his service on the parents' committee of P.S. 3, a public elementary school in lower Manhattan. It is impossible to confirm that the year of Mr. Trillin's service saw "a complete reorganization of the recess safety program," or, if so, whether Mr. Trillin was significantly involved in that project. Memories of such committee meetings are, of course, selective and unreliable—as demonstrated by the committee chairman's description of Mr. Trillin recently as "the one who usually hit the wine and cheese table pretty hard."

Little is known about the sort of person who might be chosen to fill a major post in a Trillin Adminstration. When asked some time ago about whom he depended on for advice on foreign affairs, Mr. Trillin mentioned Paul Adler, of New York, who turned out to be his travel agent. Although Mr. Adler is widely respected in his field, he has expressed no interest in leaving his business to accept a position in government. Reporters who ask Mr. Trillin whose advice he seeks in military matters are given the name of Patrick J. Powers, formerly of Chicago. In the late 1950s, Mr. Powers and Mr. Trillin were fellow enlisted men at First United States Army Headquarters on Governors Island, in New York Harbor, where Mr. Powers was widely respected for attributes that included the quality of the spit shine on his Army boots. (This was the period during which Mr. Trillin participated in the engagement alluded to in the phrase "gun-toting" citizen-soldier: In a platoon-in-the-attack demonstration for Armed Forces Day Open House, he was among those soldiers who landed in a helicopter flown from Staten Island, swept down the airfield and captured the incinerator from a detachment of computer operators.) Mr. Powers retired several years ago with the rank of Master Sergeant. It is difficult to ascertain where he stands on some of the military issues that might come before a President, since he has made no public statements himself and Mr. Trillin remains vague about the policy implications of the quotation he often credits to Mr. Powers—"a place for everything, everything in its place."

Not having ever served as a legislator—the claims that he was some sort of dormitory representative in college seem to have been withdrawn—Mr. Trillin has no legislative record that might offer clues to the sort of policies his Administration would pursue. His voting record in regular elections is, by general agreement, unusual—what he calls "independent" and his critics have characterized as "off the wall." He has acknowledged in print that he voted for John V. Lindsay in one mayoral race simply because Mr. Lindsay's wife had responded to being restricted to the women's balcony of an annual New York political dinner by flicking peanuts on those beneath her. Yet, in 1972, he refused to back Mr. Lindsay in his bid for the Democratic Presidential nomination—and for reasons some observers found equally arbitrary ("Too tall. The man's simply too tall").

Although he has not hesitated to take stands on public issues, some of his concerns have struck analysts as being rather narrow for a Presidential candidate—his view, for instance, that any restaurant that serves fried clams or fish chowder be required to serve beer as well. Except for his frequent remarks in praise of Mr. Adler's ability to decipher Italian railroad schedules, Mr. Trillin has made almost no statements on foreign policy issues—the single exception being his oft-stated position that any country requiring people to drive on the left side of the road be deprived of its vote in the United Nations. Mr. Trillin has been candid about his general approach to policy questions: "I'm not afraid to say what I think," he said recently, "unless too many people are against that, in which case I'll say the opposite, because I don't like scenes. Also, there are a lot of things I haven't thought about, so I can't say what I think about them."

Perhaps the most serious question concerning Mr. Trillin's candidacy is whether he wants the Presidency badly enough to seek it with the single-mindedness modern campaigning requires. Doubts about his motivation have been widespread since it was learned how often he had asked advisers whether the President really can order up any movie he wants to see in the White House screening room. Mr. Trillin himself has been characteristically enigmatic on the subject: "Being President would be nice, except in the summers," he has said. "But there's nothing wrong with being Governor either."

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ARTICLES.

UP AGAINST THE BALLOT

The Two-Party Monopoly

RICHARD J. WALTON

The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion. . . ." That the Constitution did not also prohibit established political parties was simply because parties—called "factions" at the time in the almost universal warnings against them—did not exist. They, too, would have been prohibited for the same reason: a state political party, like a state religion, would be a serious impediment to the democracy the Constitution was designed to protect.

The irony—double irony if you will—is that the Republican and Democratic parties have indeed become state parties, and at a time when they are weaker than they have been for a century, this status serves to sustain them. At both the state and national levels enormous benefits are conferred on the Republicans and Democrats, while serious, often fatal legal obstacles confront small or new political parties wishing to contend for votes on a local, state, or national basis.

This year, as in the past, the Communist, Socialist and Socialist Workers parties, along with the new progressive Citizens Party, are having extreme difficulties getting on the ballot nationwide, often stymied in this state or that by election laws deliberately designed to protect the Republican and Democratic parties from challenge.

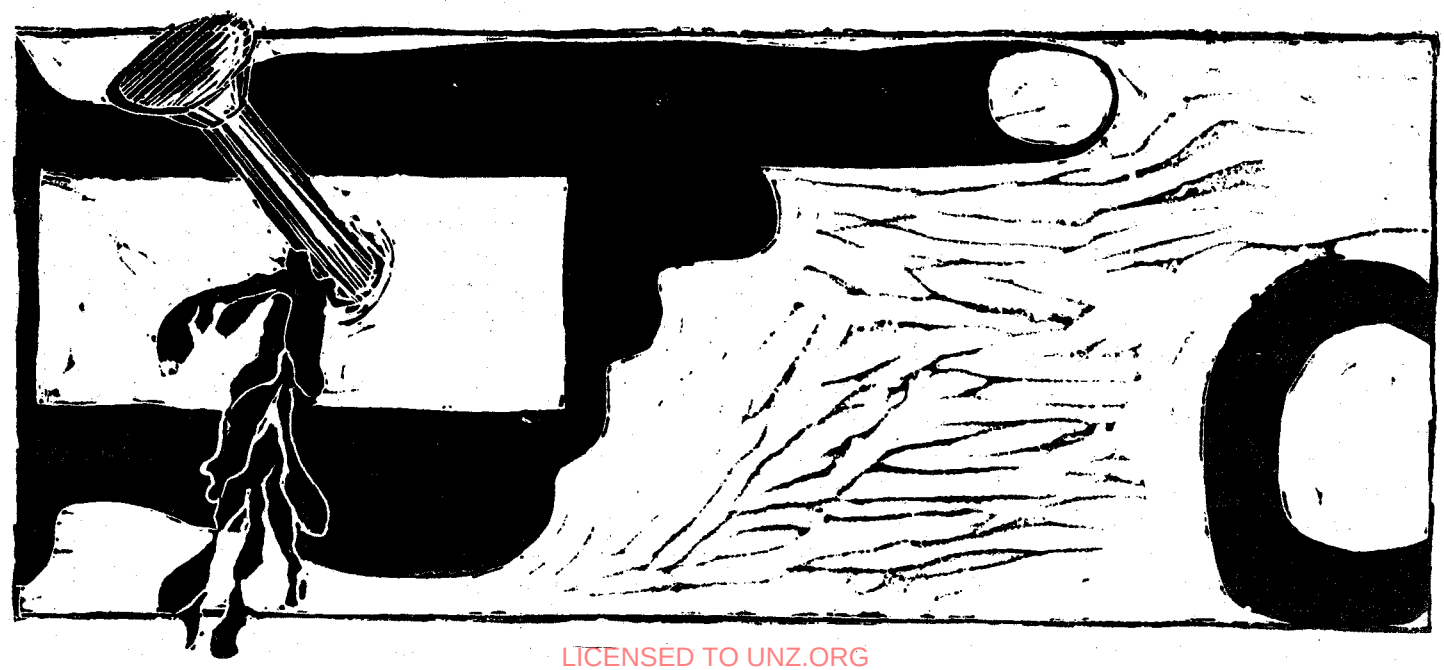
Also affected, although to a lesser degree, are the Libertarian Party and John Anderson's independent candidacy. The Libertarians are well financed and well organized, able to afford expensive legal challenges and to mount effective petition campaigns even when the requirements are unfairly difficult. This is even more the case with Anderson's campaign because of his early popular support, extraordinary media backing (indeed, it is not too much to say that he is a media creation) and financial strength that enabled him to win a half-dozen or so court victories, with others almost certain to follow well before the election.

Nevertheless, despite the success of Anderson, the "minor parties," as they are invariably called, labor under handicaps that are plainly undemocratic, and they are denied benefits received by Republican and Democratic parties, which have become, in effect or by law, truly "established" parties in most states.

As every minor party knows, many of the states "impose conditions that are all but impossible to meet, such as early filing dates, unreasonable numbers of petition signatures, limited times during which signatures may be gathered, unreasonable requirements for the validation of signatures, and requirements that signatures be gathered from scattered jurisdictions and counties, congressional districts, and even magistrate districts, and so forth." The quotation is from Eugene McCarthy's recent book, *The Ultimate Tyranny*, in which he discusses his problems getting on the ballot in 1976.

All across the country the election machinery is in the hands of the two major parties. Sometimes the parties are equally represented on state election commissions; sometimes the party in power has a majority. In either case, state

Richard J. Walton, a member of the Citizens Party national committee, is the author of a book on the 1948 Progressive Party campaign, Henry Wallace, Harry Truman, and the Cold War *(The Viking Press).*



DRAWINGS BY FRANCES JETTER

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and local election authorities are seldom helpful to minor parties despite the innumerable Federal and state court decisions ruling that election laws should be construed so as to encourage the widest possible political participation.

Let me give some specific examples. On July 29, the North Carolina Board of Elections voted three Democrats to two Republicans to deny John Anderson a place on the November ballot. Attorneys for the Democratic National Committee had argued that Anderson was disqualified because he had appeared in the May 6 Republican Presidential primary. (Not incidentally, the Democratic National Committee had budgeted $225,000 for legal efforts to block Anderson wherever possible. Given the current anti-Carter climate, this proved to be counterproductive. Newspaper editorials all over the country condemned the Democrats, and a number of prominent politicians, including such leading Democrats as George McGovern and Adlai Stevenson 3d, opposed the move. The Republicans, of course, would have done exactly the same thing if they hadn't concluded Anderson was hurting Carter more than Reagan.) Such "sore loser" statutes exist in a number of states. Anderson is appealing the decision and will, if precedent is any guide, probably win.

In Ohio, election law requires that 5,000 signatures be filed by March 20, along with a declaration of candidacy. According to John Abt, longtime legal counsel to the Communist Party, petitions for Gus Hall and Angela Davis were filed the day before the deadline. That night an election official telephoned and said the required declaration had not been included. This was simple oversight, Abt said, and the declaration was filed the next day, still before the deadline. But the Secretary of State refused to accept it, asserting that the petitions and declaration had to be filed simultaneously. Abt said there was absolutely nothing to that effect in the state election law. The matter is now before the Ohio Supreme Court.

Perhaps even more advantageous to the major parties is the hoary belief that the two-party system is sacred, somehow fundamental to the American way of life. How this absurd assumption became so deeply rooted is beyond the scope of this article, although it is obvious that so self-serving a political notion could never have been accepted without an assist from the educational system and the press. However this belief has come about, it has caused many Americans to regard voting for any but the two major parties as almost unpatriotic. (Happily, however, this shibboleth is losing its hold because of the obvious irrelevance of the parties and the pathetic quality of their candidates.)

There are also the obstacles deliberately written into state election laws to block small parties. These vary widely from state to state. (The bewildering diversity of these laws is in itself an obstacle, because coping with fifty entirely different sets of complicated state election laws places a severe strain on the smaller parties. Obviously, democracy would be best served by a uniform and fair national standard.) In some states it is easy for any new or dissident party to demonstrate a "significant modicum" (the U.S. Supreme Court's term) of support. In Iowa, for instance, 1,000 valid signatures must be filed by August 29; in New Hampshire, the same number by September 24. But in many states it is difficult, sometimes impossible, for minor parties to qualify.

The two most difficult hurdles confronting the smaller parties are unfairly early filing dates and unreasonably large numbers of signatures. Until McCarthy's race in 1976, a number of states prohibited independent (as contrasted to minor party) candidacies, but McCarthy's legal team, headed by John Armor of Baltimore, won a dozen or more victories that have established precedents from which John Anderson is benefiting this year.

Thus, Anderson has been free to concentrate on the obstacles that most hindered him: early filing dates. The filing dates in five states (Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, New Mexico and Ohio) had already passed when Anderson announced. He quickly filed suit and has already won in New Mexico and Ohio. In Ohio, Federal District Judge Robert Duncan held that the state's filing deadline of seventy-five days before the June primary "imposes a substantial burden on plaintiff's fundamental rights and is not justified by any compelling state interest." The expectation is that Anderson will prevail in the other three states.

Although Anderson's well-financed legal challenges automatically benefit the smaller parties, he has provided little help in overcoming what is an even greater obstacle: unreasonably high petition requirements. Because of his popularity (or, more accurately, the unpopularity of Ronald Reagan and Jimmy Carter), Anderson is having no difficulty getting enough signatures however high the requirement. But how many minor parties can hope to collect the 101,297 valid signatures required by California? If, say, the Citizens, Communist, Libertarian, Socialist and Socialist Workers parties, plus Anderson, seek to get on the ballot, more than 600,000 valid signatures would be required!

The requirement is even more unreasonable, proportionally, in smaller states like Georgia (57,539), Maryland (55,517), Florida (42,172), Oklahoma (38,871) and Tennessee (29,740); New York, a far larger state, requires only 20,000, still a formidable figure. According to Peter Samuels, a New York attorney, to get on the ballot in all fifty states, a minor party would have to spend $750,000 and collect 1.2 million valid signatures (which necessitates collecting many more to withstand the inevitable challenges). What minor party could do that?

Although most fair-minded people would agree that there be some modest manifestation of support to screen out frivolous candidates, it is difficult to know what is a fair requirement. A recent Supreme Court decision upheld Georgia's requirement of 3 percent of the registered vote, asserting that anything up to 5 percent could be required to demonstrate a "significant modicum" of support. But 57,000 signatures in a state the size of Georgia seems far too high. Something in the range of 1,000 to 5,000 would seem to be a fair balance between democratic principle and a state's legitimate need to discourage frivolous candidates. Even if only 1,000 were needed, that would be 50,000 nationwide—surely a "significant modicum."

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While all the minor parties have common problems, the Communist Party, not surprisingly, has some unique unto itself. Abt, who may be the dean of election lawyers, having headed the legal drive that got the 1948 Progressive Party on forty-five state ballots (failing only in Illinois, Nebraska and Oklahoma), has had to bring dozens of suits since the Communist Party began to return to electoral politics in 1972. He was astonished, he said in an interview, to find out how much more restrictive election laws had become since 1948 as many states moved to block minor parties.

Of principal concern, however, were the Federal and state laws blocking the Communist Party either explicitly or by way of loyalty oaths. The Communist Control Act of 1954, for instance, which denied the C.P. the rights, privileges and immunities of other political parties, has never been repealed. Nonetheless, Abt says that a string of court victories have pretty much removed the legal obstacles specifically directed at the party, although a residual anti-Communism left over from the 1950s often prompts state and local officials to carry on a kind of guerrilla warfare against the party.

While there has been some progress, almost exclusively in the courts, against restrictive laws in the states, a major obstacle has arisen nationally, ironically in the name of election reform. The Federal Election Campaign Act of 1974 not only finances the major parties but establishes them in a way that would have horrified those who wrote the Constitution. As McCarthy writes in his book, the "rule might be applied to churches, on the assumption that religion is good for the country but churches can be corrupted by large contributors, and hence the two largest denominations should be singled out for government support, while others would be allowed to accept only limited contributions."

Although a good case can be made for publicly financing Presidential (and, as is not the case now, senatorial and Congressional) elections, the law is grossly unfair. While the major parties each receive about $30 million to finance their campaigns, the minor parties can obtain Federal funds only after the election, and must have garnered 5 percent of the vote, a percentage achievable in only the most extraordinary circumstances.

Since individual contributions to the minor parties are limited to $1,000 (as they are to the major parties if they elect to finance their campaigns privately), it is almost impossible for minor candidates to raise enough money to mount an effective campaign. It's a classic Catch-22 situation: you don't get the money unless you get 5 percent of the vote; you don't get the 5 percent unless you get the money.

Plainly, in the interest of democracy and simple fairness, criteria should be established to provide Federal funds to minor parties when they need them most, during the campaign. Incidentally, in another of the ironies that abound in this area, one of the primary reasons for financing Presidential campaigns—to equalize expenditures—has already been circumvented by "independent" committees for Reagan.

The "reform" Federal Election Act established the two major parties in another important way. The Federal Election Commission was created with the six commissioners

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divided evenly between Republicans and Democrats, as if independents and minor-party supporters did not exist. Thus, when McCarthy requested an advisory opinion on the use of funds, the commission waited nearly six weeks—time crucial to his campaign—before voting along straight party lines to deny his request (a tie defeated a motion). The Democrats on the commission were determined to block anything that might jeopardize Carter's chances.

The F.E.C. also dragged its heels in investigating campaign violations by the Carter organization and, thus far at least, tends to be easier on incumbents, major parties and winners than it is on challengers, minor parties and losers. In any case, it is difficult for a minor party to have the finances and staff to cope with the maze of F.E.C. regulations and to contest unfavorable rulings. According to John Bolton in the July/August 1978 issue of *Regulations,* most F.E.C. civil suits were filed against third-party or independent candidates.

Moreover, the Federal Communications Commission exempted the Ford-Carter debates from the "equal time" requirements, asserting that they were bona-fide news events that television just happened to be covering. The hollowness of that argument was demonstrated when the audio failed and the protagonists, instead of continuing, waited until embarrassed technicians restored the sound.

The Postal Service had also granted lower rates (3.4 cents per letter) to the major parties while restricting Anderson and the minor parties to the regular 15-cent first-class rate. On June 6, Judge Jack Weinstein of the Federal District Court in Brooklyn found that Anderson's First Amendment and equal-protection rights had been violated.

Often, as we have seen, laws and rulings giving advantages to the major parties or handicapping minor parties can be reversed in the courts, given their patent unconstitutionality, but that requires an expenditure of time, manpower and money that minor parties seldom can afford.

It wasn't always so. In the early years of the Republic, a candidate could run for President simply by declaring his intention to do so. That was considered anyone's right. The first restrictive legislation began to appear after 1912 when Teddy Roosevelt's Bull Moose campaign cost the majority Republicans the Presidency. More such legislation was added after the Robert La Follette Progressive campaigns in the 1920s and after Henry Wallace's abortive race in 1948. That prompted Abt to recall, with considerable amusement, that state election laws were not always so inflexible. When Strom Thurmond decided to run as a Dixiecrat in 1948, the electoral doors down South magically opened wide, allowing Wallace to slip right in behind him.

Although in most states the record clearly shows that the election laws are blatantly and undemocratically biased in favor of the major parties and against the minor parties, there is no reason to expect that the Republicans and Democrats will pass remedial legislation, especially at a time when they need those advantages more than ever. So, as in so many areas of American life, we must hope that the courts will do the work that the national and state legislatures have abandoned. □

BLUES FOR MR. BOTHA

Black Power on The Move in South Africa

JAMES NORTH

Johannesburg

Every political party represented in South Africa's all-white Parliament was shocked at the spectacular guerrilla raid in early June, in which saboteurs from the banned African National Congress (A.N.C.) bombed sections of a vital Sasol refinery that extracts oil from coal. Members of the Parliament from the ruling National Party to the small opposition groups demanded increased security for essential installations to avoid a recurrence of the bold attack, which ignited the biggest fire in South African history and caused an estimated $7.2 million in damages. One opposition M.P. added a rather plaintive request to the worried debate. A black security guard, identified only as "Robert," had been wounded in the attack. Shouldn't the Government have cared enough about this man, who was, after all, injured protecting its interests, to have ascertained and released his last name?

To most white South Africans, who grow up calling blacks by their first names, when they notice them at all, the request must have seemed somewhat startling. But it serves to highlight the central question facing the regime in coming years: Can it find a significant number of black allies as South Africa slides into what the liberal *Rand Daily Mail* has called, without hyperbole, "a state of revolutionary war"?

Winning over some segments of the black population was the crucial object of Prime Minister Pieter Botha's highly touted reform proposals of last year. Telling white South Africans bluntly that they would have to "adapt or die," he proposed a set of modifications to apartheid which, taken together, amounted to an effort to create and nourish a black "middle class," principally in the urban areas. Botha's proposals were warmly welcomed by locally controlled and foreign-owned businesses alike; both have long sought to "de-racialize" some features of South African capitalism to enhance its productivity and stability. But *verkrampte* (narrow) elements in Botha's own party gutted the reforms, which were, in any case, only tentative and halfhearted.

After Zimbabwe's independence, some quickening of black political activity was expected here by those who recalled that the end of Portuguese colonial rule in nearby

James North is the pseudonym of a freelance journalist working in southern Africa.

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Mozambique and Angola had helped trigger the 1976 Soweto uprising. But the wave of unrest which started in Cape Town in mid-April and rapidly swept across the country has exceeded most of the predictions. And some of the people most active in the boycotts and strikes—Africans of mixed descent ("coloreds"), Indians, industrial workers, university students—are precisely those whom Botha had hoped to bring into alliance. Now his policy is in shambles. As the armed struggle draws nearer, he can count on only the loyalty of most (but by no means all) of the 4.4 million whites.

South Africa has been experiencing its most extensive upheaval ever. Some 100,000 black, Indian and colored students all over the country have been boycotting classes to protest the segregated, grossly unequal and ideologically conformist education system. Though conditions for colored and Indian students are somewhat better than for Africans, they are adhering fiercely to the point of view, first put forward by the black consciousness movement, that people from all three groups are "black," and they are demanding a single, equal, nonracial education policy. Black workers have struck in a number of places, for both recognition of their unions and higher wages. Increasing numbers of workers are coming to see the strike as a political as well as an economic weapon. The industrial town of Uitenhage was shut down entirely, and the regime declared it a military "operational area." In all, there have been so many flash points during the convulsion that only the relative restraint (by South African standards) of the police has kept the death toll from rising even higher.

Immediately after the Zimbabwe elections, a similar scenario for revolutionary change—a rural-based guerrilla war—seemed likely here. About one-half the black population is wedged into the ten Bantustans (or migrates regularly from them as contract workers to the 87 percent of the country designated as the "white area"). Conditions in the Bantustans are horrifying; overcrowding, hunger and disease have already reached shocking proportions, comparable to, if not worse than, the conditions in rural Zimbabwe that provided such fertile ground for the Patriotic Front guerrillas. The Bantustans have been relatively quiet lately, but they have a history of hostility and, in some cases, violent resistance to Pretoria. None of the puppet black leaders who have opted for "independence" enjoys more than a shred of legitimacy there. If the African National Congress inserted elements of its growing guerrilla army into the black zones (as indeed it may be doing), the fighters would have little trouble winning support.

The current wave of unrest is tending to alter that forecast. Rural guerrilla warfare will still be a factor, perhaps the major factor, in the years ahead. But the steadily growing political consciousness in the schools, the factories and black townships generally will give the liberation struggle an important urban component as well. In Zimbabwe, city people did participate in the revolution—but only after leaving the country, undergoing guerrilla training and returning to fight in the rural areas. The large black labor force there cheered on the Patriotic Front

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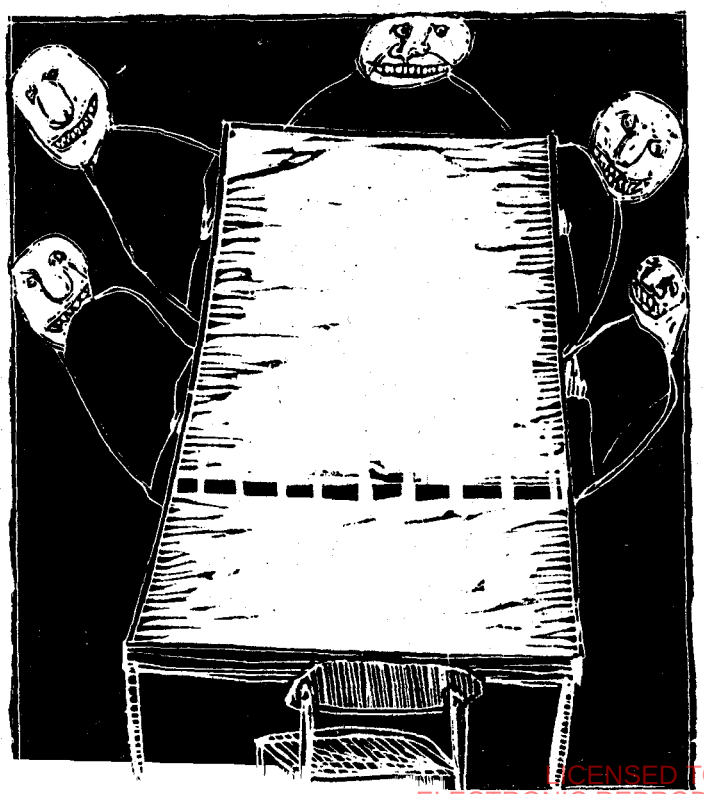
fighters from the sidelines, without taking action of its own. South Africa's present upheaval suggests that its even larger urban black community will not remain content with a similar spectator's role.

The front-line African states (which now include Zimbabwe) agree with the mixed approach to fighting the apartheid regime. It coincides with their own analysis of South Africa, and also decreases their vulnerability to attack. Some of them are rebuilding their shattered or damaged economies after the Zimbabwean war, and they do not relish the prospect of the South African military using A.N.C. guerrilla bases on their territory as a pretext to bomb and raid them. A liberation strategy that includes a significant movement inside South Africa will give the apartheid regime fewer excuses to defy world opinion and maul the front-line states.

Whatever strategy ultimately emerges, the African National Congress will be a major force. This organization, little known in the West, was founded in 1912, and for forty years waged a restrained petition and lobbying campaign for black rights. The congress then moved through successive phases of nonviolent civil disobedience and sabotage against nonhuman targets before deciding in the 1960s that all-out armed struggle was the only way to overthrow the minority regime. Several early guerrilla incursions failed dismally, and the A.N.C. has been biding its time as the protective ring of other white regimes fell. Now it finally has direct access to its homeland. A rival group, the Pan Africanist Congress, did not survive the hard years in exile. The A.N.C. was thus in the best position to enlist many of the thousands of young people forced to flee the country after 1976. They now constitute Umkonto we Sizwe (The Spear of the Nation), the congress's guerrilla army, which is scattered around in neighboring states.



In the years to come, the A.N.C. will almost certainly be misrepresented as a racially oriented organization fighting for something called "black rule." In fact, it has never advocated pushing the whites into the sea. It includes a few as members and would welcome others. Its preferred term for the kind of society it envisions in South Africa is "nonracial." The A.N.C. will also be criticized for accepting aid from the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. It had little choice: As the West continued to cozy up to apartheid, the organization had nowhere else to turn. Some of its leaders are also members of the banned, multiracial Communist Party; many others are not. The A.N.C.'s program is basically nationalist, with certain socialist features. And it enjoys solid and growing support within the country from people who are indifferent to its international alignments so long as it increases pressure on the regime.

Pretoria is already having trouble coping with the insurgency in Namibia, which it continues to rule in defiance of the United Nations. Shortly after the Sasol raid, Botha told a hushed Parliament that South African troops had fought their biggest battle thus far against the South West Africa People's Organization, the Namibian guerrilla movement. He said his military had attacked SWAPO camps in southern Angola, killing 200 guerrillas but losing sixteen of their own men. The casualty figure was the greatest single loss by the South African Army since World War II, and the battle follows a relentlessly increasing pattern of fighting in the territory over the past year.

Botha continues to push South Africa's stand-in, the Democratic Turnhalle Alliance, closer to unilateral independence while stalling on United Nations efforts to hold internationally supervised elections. The regime, which was stunned by the Zimbabwe election results, is more reluctant than ever to give SWAPO a chance at the ballot box. Botha is apparently hoping that the Western appeasement will continue, blocking the sanctions that South Africa's defiance should have provoked long ago. But even if South Africa manages to hamstring the United Nations, it still remains mired in a no-win conflict while the situation worsens at home.

Botha's increasingly influential military advisers are said to be telling him to abandon Namibia (keeping, of course, as much indirect control as possible) in order to better concentrate his defenses. It must be an agonizing decision for him. One in ten of the territory's population of one million is white, most of them conservative Afrikaners or Germans. His "betrayal" of them would strengthen the right-wing elements in his own party, who have already paralyzed his efforts to modify apartheid. To break this stalemate, Botha is moving closer to a "reformist" dictatorship, centralizing power in the executive and military and circumventing or ignoring Parliament and the National Party caucus. He has even started (on a small scale) to use the extensive security legislation against the far right. South Africa's white rulers are thus facing their greatest crisis bitterly divided.

This country is entering a prolonged period of confusion [illegible]

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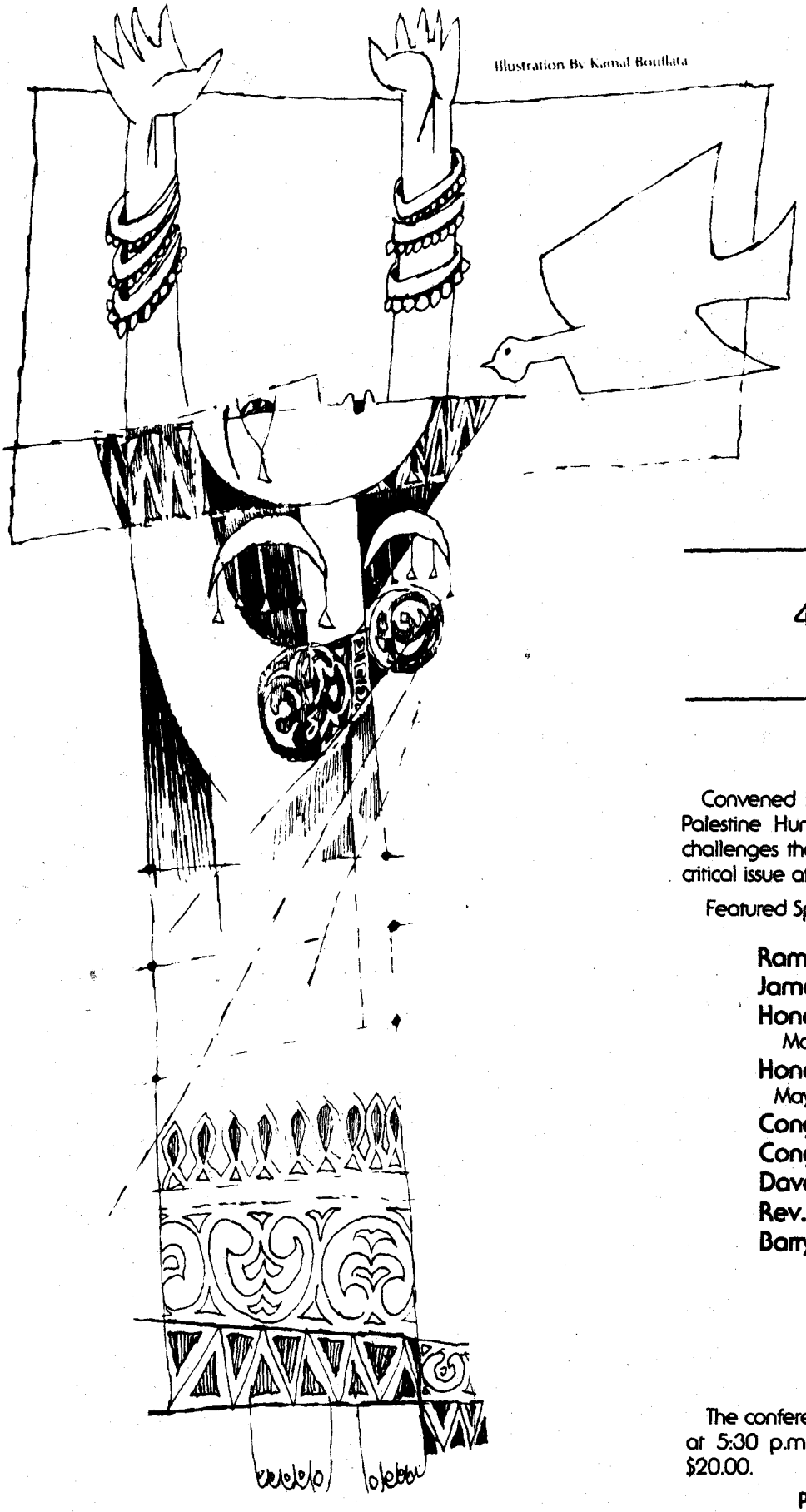

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world interest as the likelihood of slaughter increases. Black leaders, together with some whites, have proposed a last effort at peaceful settlement before the country is engulfed in war. They are asking Botha to release Nelson Mandela, the 62-year-old A.N.C. leader, from the Robben Island prison fortress off Cape Town, where he has been serving a life sentence since 1964. Mandela and other black leaders (who would also be released or permitted to return from exile), Botha and the Nationalists, and others would then all sit down in a national conference devoted to a sincere and serious dialogue about South Africa's future.

Botha has already refused to release Mandela, preferring to continue negotiating with tame black politicians who have little or no following. But he can be forced to change his mind. Full economic sanctions, enforced by the international community, would send him scurrying to the bargaining table. The pro-investment rationale is awesomely irrelevant as this country's revolutionary war begins. The A.N.C. guerrillas, and their sympathizers inside the country, are not interested in slightly higher wages or integrated canteens at foreign-owned concerns. "We don't want our chains polished," goes a common saying here, "we want them removed." What's more, the A.N.C. realizes that foreign investment provides key technological and financial help to the war machine that is already being deployed against them.

The West is unlikely to seize this last chance to avert a catastrophe. In the future, Western governments will piously deplore the carnage, arguing lamely that it was inevitable. But some of the blood will stain their hands. □

THE '79 GAS CRISIS

What the D.O.J. Didn't Tell Us

PETER ACHNACARRY

The Mobil propaganda machine, which spews out a stream of charges that the Federal Government is persecuting the oil companies, had to reverse gears when, on July 17, the Attorney General released a report of the Department of Justice to the President concerning the gasoline shortage of 1979. The report, along with a companion report by the Department of Energy, apparently absolved the oil companies of any responsibility for the gasoline shortage of 1979 and the resulting long lines for motorists. "Not Guilty," Mobil's flacks triumphantly headlined their next full-page ads.

A close reading of the Justice Department report, however, leads to the conclusion that several of the major multinational oil companies bear a large share of the responsibility for that shortage. Moreover, the investigation procedures used were so basically flawed that its findings are tainted. Finally, and perhaps most important, the report is most notable for the questions it did not ask about American energy policy.

The major conclusion reached by the Justice Department study was that the gasoline shortage resulted from a "deficit in crude oil imports in the first nine months of 1979 because of a world crude shortage, and that shortage was, in large part, the result of the Iranian production cutback." The Justice Department estimates that the shortage was approximately 300,000 barrels per day during the first nine months of 1979. Omitted from the report, however, is any reference to a confidential Treasury Department report concluding that no shortfall resulted from the decline in Iranian production because it was more than compensated for by stepped-up production by other oil producers. [See editorial, "Whitewashed Oil," *The Nation*, August 2-9.]

This glaring omission aside, given the department's own findings of net shortfall of 300,000 barrels per day in U.S. crude oil imports, there is every reason to believe that increased Alaskan crude oil production transported through the Trans-Alaska Pipeline could have made up for the shortfall. Exxon, Atlantic Richfield and Standard Oil Company of Ohio (Sohio), a subsidary of the British Petroleum Company, own and operate the Alaska pipeline as well as the Prudhoe Bay crude oil resources which are moved through it. The pipeline's nominal capacity was originally two million barrels per day of crude oil, which at the time was thought to be the maximum that could be extracted from the Prudhoe Bay reservoirs. Later, however, it was determined by the companies that the reservoirs would only sustain a maximum efficient production of 1.5 million barrels per day with a possible additional 100,000 barrels if additional reservoir work were undertaken. By December 1978, the companies had installed pumping stations and other equipment along the line capable of moving only 1.2 million barrels through the pipeline, or 300,000 barrels less than could be produced. Lacking were two additional pumping stations, requiring approximately $500,000 each in additional investment.

Not until late October 1979 was this additional equipment installed. By December 1979, the Trans-Alaska Pipeline was transporting 1.5 million barrels of crude oil per day from the Prudhoe Bay Alaskan reservoirs. In other words, if we accept the Justice Department's contention that the primary cause of the gasoline shortage during the first nine months of 1979 was a 300,000 barrel-per-day shortfall in crude oil imports engendered by the crisis in Iran, then the great gasoline shortage of 1979 can as logically be attributed to the failure of the three oil companies that owned the Prudhoe Bay oil reserves and the Alaskan pipeline to spend $1 million to install two additional pumping stations capable of transporting the additional oil to the lower forty-eight states.

Indeed, back in 1974 Exxon vice president George Piercy explained the 1973 Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries price rises in terms of an absence of spare capacity outside the cartel area. In hearings held by the Senate

Peter Achnacarry is the pseudonym of a Washington analyst who has closely monitored the international oil scene for many years.

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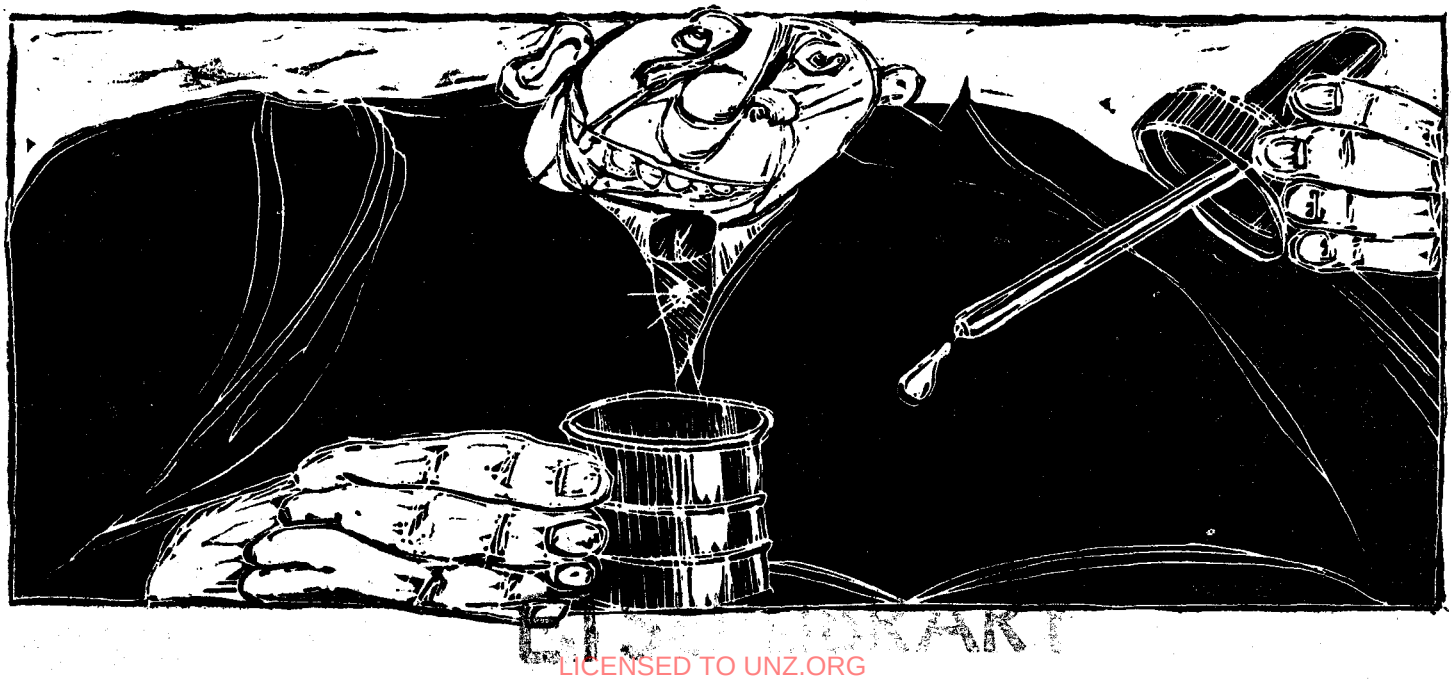
Foreign Relations Subcommittee on Multinational Corporations, chaired by Senator Frank Church, Piercy testified that "spare capacity is capacity that is idle, available to be used to produce more oil," and that it was the absence of such capacity in the non-OPEC countries that led to the explosive rises in petroleum prices during the early 1970s. Yet when Exxon and its partners had an opportunity to add to such spare capacity in Alaska, they did not do so.

Undoubtedly, the companies would reply that at the time—1977 and 1978—it was not economically feasible to install such capacity. There was a surplus of crude oil worldwide; West Coast refineries could not absorb the additional Alaskan crude, and it was too costly to transport the crude oil through the Panama Canal for U.S. East Coast markets. Moreover, Congress had prohibited the export of Alaskan crude oil. But these reasons do not answer the question of why spare capacity was not seen as a potential check on OPEC's price-setting powers, especially in light of Piercy's 1974 testimony. An explanation, however, may lie in the line of questioning pursued by then Senator Edmund Muskie, who was a member of the subcommittee. Muskie noted that the amount of spare producing capacity was the result of company decisions. He observed: "The picture I get is a deliberate policy of underestimating demand, failure to take advantage of full opportunity to enlarge capacity, and the result of that has been this enormous disparity between demand and capacity that confronts us with our problem today." As Muskie observed to Piercy, the companies "implemented a deliberate policy of underestimating your need for capacity, and that underestimating is more profitable than overestimating."

Having concluded that the 1979 gasoline shortage was primarily a consequence of the loss of Iranian oil, neither the Department of Justice nor Energy ever thought to inquire as to why Exxon, Sohio and Arco neglected to have the spare pipeline capacity on hand that would have enabled the United States to compensate for the loss with additional Alaskan oil. Indeed, there is at least some indication that there was a dispute among the companies as to the advisability of installing the two additional pumping stations, with at least one of the companies resisting adding the equipment. A serious investigation would have sought to exploit these differences to illuminate the motivations of the companies.

But this was not a serious investigation. The Justice Department relied upon statistical information supplied by the companies accompanied by affidavits as to the truthfulness of the information. No internal documents of the companies were subpoenaed. The multinationals subcommittee's investigation of the oil companies' behavior in the period immediately before and after the Arab oil embargo of 1973 demonstrated that there is no substitute for access to internal corporate documents. It is generally believed, for example, that if it had not been for the 1973 Yom Kippur War and the U.S. resupply of arms to Israel there would have been no cutback in Saudi Arabian oil production, a cutback that enabled the cartel countries to double the price of crude oil in December 1973. In fact, the internal documents of the Aramco partner companies, Exxon, Texaco, Mobil and Standard Oil Company of California (Socal), along with the sworn testimony of Socal executives under close questioning by the subcommittee, conclusively demonstrated that had there been no embargo, approximately 40 percent of Saudi Arabian oil production would still have been shut down for purely technical reasons, including severe pressure drops and saltwater seepage in the main Saudi reservoirs, which imperiled the ultimate amount of oil that could be recovered and was the result of too rapid production. The same problems recurred in 1977 and thus prevented a rapid expansion of crude oil production. [See Achnacarry, "Breaking the Saudi Connection," *The Nation,* October 13, 1979.] If the subcommittee had followed the investigative techniques of the Justice Department, it would have speculated that alternative explanations—oil embargo and bad weather—were sufficient to explain the production cutbacks and never would have learned the truth: that there are technical constraints upon the ability of



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the Saudis to rapidly increase crude oil production. An investigation of the oil companies that fails to subpoena internal communications of the companies and take sworn testimony of executives cannot be taken seriously.

Unfortunately, in 1979, critics of the companies overstated the case against them with unsubstantiated rumors that the companies were "slow-steaming" tankers, diverting supplies from the United States to other markets and shutting in domestic production. In so doing, they provided the Justice Department with straw men to knock down. The department also appears to have been looking for evidence of collusive actions in violation of the antitrust laws, and it was predictable that they would find none. Ever since the 1952 cartel case brought against the major oil companies by the Department of Justice, which was subsequently abandoned by the department without full prosecution, the companies have gone to great lengths to employ top legal talent to insure that they would not again be vulnerable to such prosecution.

What the two departments did not do, however, was inquire into the subtle but more relevant question posed by Senator Muskie in 1974: Can the United States rely on the big oil companies to counteract the price-setting practices of the OPEC cartel when these companies' interests run parallel to those of the cartel?

One answer was provided by the State Department's Bureau of Intelligence and Research. A July 1977 report (declassified at the request of Congressman Benjamin Rosenthal) notes that:

> The Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) relies on the multinational oil companies as a vital link in policing its price-supporting cartel. As long as members use the multinational companies, the cartel guards itself against price erosion. . . . If OPEC members continue to market most of their crude oil through the multinational companies, the threat to the cartel is fairly low.

And a January 1976 report by the bureau further notes:

> Despite the erosion of their positions in producing countries, the international oil companies are unlikely to take any action aimed at breaking the cartel. They are too dependent on OPEC for secure supplies to feed their downstream investment. Some make the most of their profits and/or have most of their assets in OPEC countries. Moreover, U.S. oil companies benefit from OPEC price increases to the extent that they own U.S. domestic production in oil exempt from price controls.

Determinedly looking for evidence of collusion which the companies are much too smart to provide, the Departments of Energy and Justice assiduously avoided coming to grips with the critical issue involving multinational oil companies and U.S. energy policy: What role should the Government play with respect to spare capacity, as in the case of the Trans-Alaska Pipeline? Should the decision as to the level of oil stocks be left for the companies to make on purely commercial grounds? The Justice Department study notes that another precipitating cause of the 1979 gasoline crisis was that by the end of 1978 stocks of crude oil were allowed to be run down to low levels. No explanation was offered as to why this occurred. Yet in 1980, we have company stocks at record levels. *Petroleum Intelligence Weekly,* the respected trade journal, reports that "[e]very nook and cranny in the world oil supply sytem is rapidly filling up with surplus crude oil. Desperate companies are seeking out expensive floating storage space for extended periods." Will the companies be allowed to run down those stocks, creating scarcity conditions so that the next political upheaval in an oil-exporting state again becomes an excuse for jacking up prices?

Now is an ideal time to increase capacity and have a substitute available when imported oil is cut back. Such reserve capacity would impose constraints upon the price-setting leverage of the cartel. Yet the construction of the Alaskan gas pipeline is effectively stalled because the same oil companies that held back on installing the spare capacity on the oil pipeline own the gas and they are squabbling with the consortium of gas companies that were awarded the rights to construct the pipeline. At full capacity, the pipeline, which is supposed to be linked up with Canadian surplus gas in the Western Canadian provinces, could carry the equivalent of 400,000 barrels of crude oil per day, or nearly one-third of oil imports from Saudi Arabia. But the companies cannot come to a financial agreement, so four years after the pipeline route was awarded, a construction plan is nowhere in sight. Clifton Garvin, Exxon's chief executive officer, is quoted in *Oil and Gas Journal,* another respected trade weekly, as saying an agreement is two years off.

Exxon can afford to wait. As Senator Muskie's line of questioning indicated, scarcity is in the interests of the companies. But is it in the U.S. national interest? And isn't this the fundamental issue: Can we afford to leave key elements of U.S. energy policy in the hands of precisely those companies who stand to benefit the most from perpetuation of the status quo? □

"Empire as a Way of Life"

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Information

(Continued From Front Cover)

socialist world shares a different doctrine, though a similar practice, from that of many developing societies: It functions on the assumption that the press must present only information consistent with the acknowledged goals and purposes of a society.

But lurking behind the free-versus-controlled-press debate is a larger issue: The collecting, editing and distribution of information is now a key element in all economies. In what the French have come to speak of as the *informatisation* of society, more and more governmental, economic and cultural processes have come to depend upon a set of companies, institutions and systems that make up the informa-

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tion sector. As a result, the tension over the international flow of news has spread across a wide range of concerns that formerly were not conceived as part of this sector. Changing technology has brought more and more matters into the problem-strewn area of information policy, which has engendered a more momentous international wrangle. As the world moves uncertainly into a New Information Order, the broader, more complex problem of the international "trade" in information will increasingly shadow the information debate in the 1980s and beyond.

Information Haves and Have-Nots

In the era of the computer, information has come to be seen as the raw material which, when reduced to the coded programs computers use, can be bought and sold as a commodity. In one sense, news agencies have always bought and sold information for media and business use, but in the age of the computer a far greater range of material has been processed for storage in computers and transmission between them. The great telecommunications highways that distribute information within and between nations have displaced transportation highways as the core communications systems of a modern society—and of the modern world. If all the banks shut their doors but maintained their telecommunications links it would still be possible for a monetary economy to continue in existence. If the production plants of all the newspapers in the world suddenly ceased, it would be possible to transmit (certainly through the developed countries) sufficient knowledge about economic, agricultural, military, diplomatic and cultural affairs for society to continue much the same. The information debate between developed and developing nations thus involves the whole sphere of information economics. For the world distribution of the means of production and distribution of information is grossly unequal and part of the quest for a New World Information Order consists of an attempt to redress this aspect of information inequality. The distinctions that could come about between societies well endowed with information systems and societies without them could be much greater than the disparities in income separating societies today.

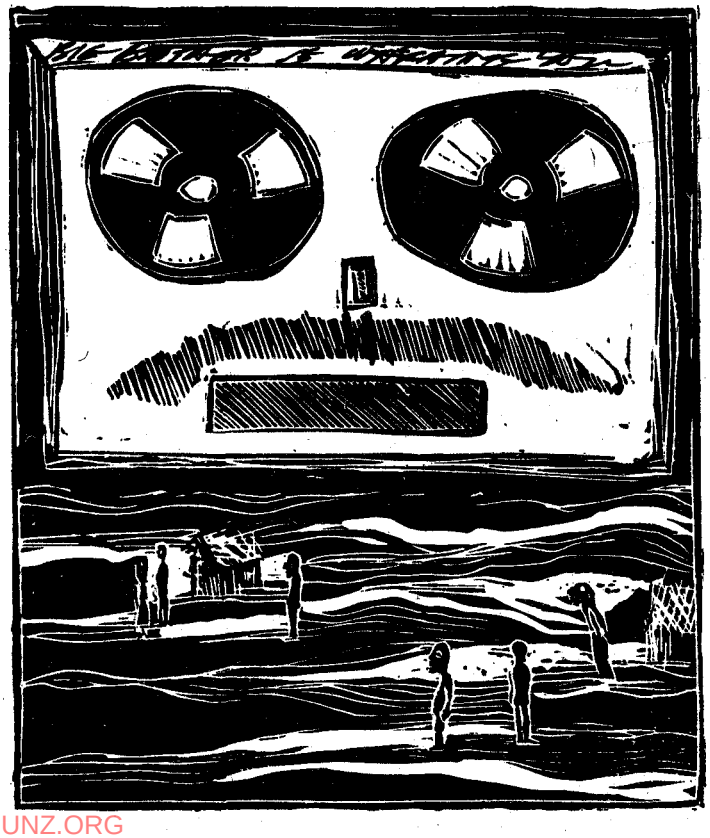
One may cite an example of how this North-South disparity manifests itself in an international forum. At the World Administrative Radio Conference held in Geneva in 1979, complex technical arguments over the organization of use of the electromagnetic spectrum—radio wavelengths—took place. The American delegation had a staff in Geneva of more than one hundred, compared with one or two from some of the smallest countries; nearly a thousand people had been involved in preparing the U.S. plans for W.A.R.C.; with the use of massive computer expertise the United States had mapped out a negotiating strategy with a complex set of fallback positions. The delegation had also collected all known facts concerning the positions of all other delegations, as well as informal information collected in private briefings and everything relevant that could be found out about the members of all the other delegations. The whole of this information could be held on-line and retrieved in a matter of moments. It provided the United States with a tremendous advantage over all its rivals. The world power game had moved into an information phase.

The electromagnetic spectrum is the resource upon which the exploitation of all information resources (or almost all) depends. It is based upon the technical capability to make electromagnetic energy oscillate, to move in waves, at different rates; the spectrum itself consists of the total range of possible rates of oscillation. Since all electromagnetic waves travel at the same speed—186,000 miles per second—the wave peaks and troughs will occur at a higher frequency the shorter the distance between them. The longer the wavelength, the lower the frequency.

Each information device developed during the twentieth century uses up more of the available frequencies, and so the International Telecommunications Union (I.T.U.) has gradually divided the total spectrum into bands within which specific services may be transmitted. There are twenty of these in all, including radio and television broadcasting, radio astronomy, mobile radio, point-to-point communication and so on.

Spectrum Warfare

The electromagnetic spectrum can be "stretched." A



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radio station of the 1920s would use three or four times as much bandwidth as a similar radio station of today; more advanced equipment at transmitter end and at receiving end has meant that the spectrum is less wasted than in the past. Each decade makes further economies possible, but always at a higher level of technology, so that nations with primitive transmitters can be branded as "squanderers" of the spectrum. Nations that exceed the level of power permitted them on a given bandwidth may destroy the signals of others. Spectrum warfare has often broken out on the frequencies most commonly used for long-distance radio messages, and a number of stations have occupied the short waves with the intention of disseminating national propaganda across the world in signals powerful enough to render the band useless to others who have legitimate rights to it. In fact, on the short wave, anything up to a quarter of the users are guilty of one form of misbehavior or another, so desirable and in such short supply are its frequencies.

The I.T.U. performs the increasingly complex and politically sensitive task of allocating bandwidths to services and registering each individual nation's frequency usage. Every few years a World Administrative Radio Conference is held under the I.T.U's aegis to allocate the whole of the spectrum to the new services that technology has thrown up in the meantime or to reallocate it to take account of improvements and economies in bandwidth that have become possible in existing services. The I.T.U. also convenes W.A.R.C.s to sort out specific problems within various areas of the spectrum, as well as more wide-ranging ones; thus the conference held in Geneva in late 1979 dealt with the reallocation of services over an immense part of the spectrum.

As the information debate has progressed during the 1970s, spectrum allocation has become intensely politicalized, and arguments concerning the use to be assigned a particular band have taken on the same kind of ideological coloration as arguments over oil resources or frontiers or coffee prices. In the past it was sufficient for the I.T.U. to ask the intending users of a section of the spectrum to form an orderly queue, as it were, and stake their claims. Today the developing countries demand that spectrum rights be allocated to nations that are unable at the present time to exploit them.

For example, at the special W.A.R.C. of 1977, the developing nations were instrumental in forcing the conference to accept a general distribution of the frequencies that would be used for direct-broadcast satellites; it will be decades before more than one or two of the developing nations have their own satellites, and the United States argued fiercely that those nations now able to exploit satellites be permitted free use of the frequencies according to traditional practice. The I.T.U. has normally allowed a controlled form of "squatters' rights" to prevail, so long as each nation registers its use with the International Frequency Registration Board and keeps each service within the appropriate section of the spectrum. The developing world, however, has been adopting a deliberate policy of trying to restrict the technological advantages that accrue to countries that develop early the economic and industrial capacity to exploit a world resource. At the 1979 W.A.R.C. they voted to have their private national frequencies alloted for satellites that do not yet exist.

There are powerful general arguments against "squatting" and in favor of the temporary non-use of frequencies. America's Public Broadcasting System, for instance, exists only because of the foresight of the Federal Communications Commission in refusing to allow further television stations onto the popular VHF band in the late 1940s. For several years no further squatting was allowed to domestic American commercial broadcasters on this band, and fifteen years later the result was that, in a changing social climate, America was able to construct for itself a network of some hundreds of educational and public stations; these today provide the United States public with a national noncommercial broadcasting system on the VHF band. It could be said that the developing world is demanding a similar moratorium, but on an international plane, which could result in a cheap world communications system at the turn of the century when satellites may be more easily available to all.

The HF Crush

Perhaps the single controversy that illuminates the struggle over the spectrum more clearly than any other is that over the High Frequency (short wave) band. This band has certain special qualities that make it attractive for very-long-distance broadcasting, and it is now overoccupied and used in its fixed and broadcast sections by a number of very noisy neighbors. The crush is compounded by the demands of the new groups of users and potential users in the developed world; there are companies trying to supply the new demand for mobile services, which is probably the fastest growing new use for this part of the spectrum. Within a decade or so a very large proportion of automobiles will be equipped with telephones; more and more executives want "beepers"; already police, medical services and many others are demanding the right to exchange information while on the move. Thus, the developed world wants to use HF for modern luxuries; the Third World, however, wants it for necessities.

African domestic radio, for example, is a heavy user of the broadcast section of the band, which is apportioned among several uses, including ship-to-shore radio, amateur radio and the like. It is an ideal means for reaching large poor and dispersed populations without having to erect and service a large number of expensive transmitters. It is perfect for linking remote regions to distant transmitters for long-distance policing, for organizing social services across great deserts and for general administrative work under difficult conditions when expensive equipment is not available.

The developing nations have recognized that the industrialized countries are intent upon spreading modish mobile services in the band, and at a special meeting held at Yaounde in the summer of 1979, their representatives declared: "Developed countries possess more viable and more extensive means to satisfy their needs and could consequent-

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ly give up the use of HF bands in favor of developing countries." By the autumn of 1979 their demands were brought to the general W.A.R.C. in Geneva, and they succeeded in causing tremendous delays in the negotiations. Algeria demanded that 70 percent of the band be assigned to Third World countries.

The HF band, which is only one small section of the spectrum currently in dispute, is subject to a complexity of arguments comparable to the Schleswig-Holstein question in the nineteenth century, which, according to Viscount Palmerston, had been understood by only three people, one being dead, one driven mad by it, while he, the third, had forgotten it. Yet buried in the arguments are all the current international tensions over the inequitable distribution of information. The conclusion of the 1979 W.A.R.C. is by no means the end of the quarrel, which may last until the I.T.U. itself is transformed or politicized in the same way as UNESCO.

The I.B.M. Octopus

At the center of the global information problem stands the Collossus of the International Business Machines Corporation, which is responsible for 70 percent of the world's computer installations. In 1978, its revenue for the sale of computers was $10 billion and profits from this sector accounted for half its entire profits. Within the United States, I.B.M. is not permitted to sell computer services such as data processing. However, it has a $1 billion a year overseas trade in such services. It employs 130,000 workers in plants outside the United States. In nearly all of the developed countries I.B.M. has at least 50 percent of the total communications market. Even in Japan, which is well on the way to self-sufficiency in computer hardware, I.B.M. still has more than a quarter of the market. It is the power of I.B.M. that helps to explain the extraordinary predominance of the United States in the information field.

I.B.M. will take a giant stride toward consolidating its dominance when it enters the satellite field with its projected S.B.S.—Satellite Business Systems—a company formed by I.B.M., Comsat (the U.S. communications satellite company) and the Aetna Life and Casualty Company. Its plans have been shrouded in discreet corporate public relations for several years, perhaps awaiting the outcome of the 1979 W.A.R.C., since its life depends upon the allocation of a suitable set of frequencies reserved for ground-to-satellite data links, both for direct broadcasting and fixed satellites. S.B.S. has been "grandfathering" a frequency in this band (i.e., squatting on it prior to allocation, in the hope that its right to continue using the frequency will be eventually conceded) since 1978.

S.B.S. is really the latest phase in the long struggle between the giant American Telephone and Telegraph Company, which is the principal American common carrier for public telecommunications services, and I.B.M. The new system will offer large corporations the chance to send all of their messages—letters, invoices, filing systems, computer data and telex and telephone services—by way of the satellite to small ground stations situated on the premises of the companies concerned. From these local points telephone calls can be sent through A.T.&T.'s normal system. S.B.S. is capable of transmitting an enormous volume of traffic, all of which, in effect, would be business taken away from the U.S. postal system and A.T.&T. No longer would a company have to rely on outside governmental bodies for its internal communications; its external communications would be vastly cheapened, too, and in due course S.B.S. would be able to offer inexpensive communications between companies and across national frontiers, when regulations permit.

S.B.S. is not only, however, a blow for communications cheapness, instantaneity and corporate autonomy. It is also a blow against I.B.M.'s new competitors that have sprung up in Europe, Japan and the developing countries. All companies using the new internal communications system based on S.B.S. would have to use I.B.M.'s computer installations. The new minicomputer movement might even be crippled, since it will become cheaper to use the capacity of a distant main-frame computer of the kind I.B.M. specializes in, once the heavy costs of normal telecommunications links (as previously provided through A.T.&T.) are eliminated.

So far, S.B.S.'s services are conceived of as intracorporate. But it is important to note the role of Comsat in the trio of entrepreneurs behind S.B.S. At present a great deal of thought is being given in the United States to the rewriting of the 1934 Communications Act, which is the basic law on which the regulation of telecommunications of all kinds (including radio and television) is based. The proposals of Congressman Lionel Van Deerlin have been widely encouraged but not yet accepted by Congress, despite two years of attempts on the part of his committee to "deregulate" a great number of telecommunications servic When the rewriting of this act is ultimately approved, as is virtually inevitable (although no date can be put on it), it will be legal for Comsat—hitherto a domestic agency—to sell satellite services overseas as well as nationally. At this point, S.B.S., firmly seated on the spectrum and capable of generating and processing a much greater volume of traffic than that generated by U.S. intracorporate business, will be able

DATA BASE, U.S.A.

If a total count is made of all the records held in all the data bases in the world (something that inevitably has to be a guess rather than an estimate), it is clear that America holds nearly nine-tenths of them (forty-six million out of fifty-two million). Of America's share, one-quarter are records of the U.S. Government, 35 percent are those of commercial organizations and 40 percent of noncommercial bodies. Three-quarters of all records held in computers are directly or indirectly related to science and technology, and most of the overlap between U.S. governmental and scientific material is accounted for by military research.

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to move into the field of international mail and telephone connection, replacing the cumbersome, unreliable services of many countries with instant and dependable communications, both on paper and in sound. The whole of the filing systems of corporations around the world could be stored in I.B.M. computers situated anywhere in the world. Where data links are currently costly and clogged with traffic between continents and across oceans, they will become ridiculously cheap by traditional standards and plentiful.

At Stake—Nationhood

The problems of sovereignty and indigenous control will, however, be multiplied to an extent that is at present difficult even to comprehend. One of the earliest national institutions over which the nation state insisted on maintaining monopoly was the postal system. In modern circumstances, each postal and telecommunications administration retains the right to intercept communications between the different parts of a great transnational corporation in order to enforce laws on taxation, privacy and so on. One great fear is that developing nations could be tempted to cut deals with S.B.S. in their anxiety to obtain its cheap and reliable services, perhaps in exchange for the offer of help for governmental communications, and will only later discover the extent to which they have become dependent upon Comsat and I.B.M.

SWIFT BANKING

An apposite example of the kind of threat to national economic policy making posed by transborder flow of data is the computerized banking system called SWIFT (Society for World Financial Information Transactions); this system allows finance houses to buy and sell in a single worldwide market and to make loans anywhere and at any time. It means that cash can be moved around the world with extreme speed and without any hindrance being placed through physical or legal obstacles. It holds 300,000 transactions at a time, some of considerable size, beyond all national supervision. The entire "bank" is run on a computer that generates a kind of stateless currency, rocketing about the globe, potentially creating international currency instability as it moves. If this system acquired large sums it could bring catastrophe to struggling currencies in the course of an afternoon. In the hands of a hostile power (a government or a transnational company intent on taking revenge upon a small country attempting, say, to substitute local manufactures for cheaper imports), SWIFT could be a devastating tool, as deadly as a nuclear weapon. As well as causing currency and stock fluctuations, such devices can create a kind of electronic "free port" where funds can be placed in unregulated markets. Clearly the policy of most governments in the world, including those of many industrialized societies, has simply not yet taken measure of the problems incurred by transborder flow of data.

At a conference organized at the instigation of French President Valéry Giscard d'Estaing in Paris in September 1979, Henry Geller, Assistant Secretary for Communications and Information in the Carter Administration, spoke to European information experts about the differences between the American and European approaches to transborder data flow. The thrust of Geller's speech, and those of members of the Van Deerlin committee also, was that the opening up of competition between I.B.M. and A.T.&.T. is the only way to render them publicly accountable and at the same time enable society to derive benefit from the new technology quickly. "Instead of there being a largely monopolistic market limited to one or two major firms, we see a highly dynamic competitive market with new firms entering and existing firms free to exit," Geller said.

In forcing its transnational giants into an intensified competition, America is in effect inducing them to challenge further the indigenous control of data in all of the countries across which the American giants will conduct their economic warfare. For the market over which the competition will take place is not merely that of the United States but the whole of the rest of the world. The globe is thus to become a battlefield for the corporate competition of America's information giants.

That may not be wholly a bad thing; it may bring more efficient services and spur more countries to develop and make more efficient their own industries in order to compete. But the lower down the scale of development, the more likely a society is to be the victim of this competition rather than a participant. Certain societies may lose such free control as they presently exercise over their own economic destiny. All societies will have to think very hard about how to *regulate* against the worst effects of American deregulation. What seems to be a liberal cause in America can bring out illiberal forces in other societies, in favor of more and more governmental control, and those who choose the latter may be absolutely correct in their own terms. Freedom itself is ultimately threatened in the era of competition between the information transnationals.

What is at stake today is nationhood. The repertory of techniques now available to companies that are essentially uncontrolled by any national entity, and are therefore effectively unassailable by any single set of laws, is such as to negate the possibility of secure nationhood for any who permit the unquestioned flow of data across their borders. The industrialized countries have some power of riposte because they house at least meaningful quantities of data and may generate larger amounts. They can bargain with I.B.M. almost as equals. This is not the case with the larger part of the developing world, for whom national independence could become little more than an empty phrase.

The challege to national sovereignty posed by direct broadcasting satellites, remote sensing and transborder data flow is a mere outward expression of a challenge to the human sensibility. Those cultures that are, as technological have-nots, condemned to be the observed rather than the observers may in this, as in other matters, turn out to be not the beneficiaries of modernity but rather the victims. □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS.

With the Lawrentians in New Mexico

FREDERICK TURNER

"Fundamentally," said Leslie Fiedler of the four-day (July 16-20) D. H. Lawrence festival in New Mexico, "it's an act of piety." But then, being the man he is, Fiedler couldn't resist adding that "it shades off into tourism." Indeed. Santa Fe is a charming place to visit, and Taos to the north is dramatic on a grand scale. So they were lured here from far-off places—scholars, writers, stage people, students and unofficial Lawrence aficionados—to celebrate the strange, driven man who had spent a few months in this place almost sixty years ago and whose ashes now lie in a cracked, peeling shrine in the mountains above Taos.

On the eve of his thirty-seventh birthday, Lawrence and Frieda had climbed down from the train at the tiny station at Lamy, New Mexico, to begin a fitful stay in what he hoped was a wild and nonhuman part of the New World. Waiting for him were Mabel Dodge Luhan, self-appointed patroness of the New Mexico arts, and her Pueblo husband, Tony. The party had dinner there at the station while twilight closed down on the Cerrillos Mountains, and in the darkness they drove north toward Santa Fe, the heavy car jouncing over the narrow dirt roads. Then there was a mechanical breakdown; Tony Luhan disappeared beneath the hood to fix it, and another Laurentian dream died in the deft, grease-stained hands of this "Noble Savage" who was hardly supposed to know anything of the ugly practicalities of that civilization from which the artist had fled.

So, inevitably, New Mexico proved another disappointment to Lawrence, who had thoughts of founding a utopia in "my far-off wilderness place"—variously located in Florida, the east slope of the Andes, the Abruzzi and Australia (see Samuel Hynes, "Modern Messiah and Provincial Genius," *The Nation*, May 3). This was a fact conveniently overlooked at the festival except by John Nichols who perversely insisted on calling attention to Lawrence's many negative comments on New Mexico and its people. Nichols read passages from *St. Mawr* to the Santa Fe audience, and there was uneasy laughter as Lawrence was heard whining about the "curious disintegration working all the time" in the mountains above Taos and about the "curious debasing malevolence that was in the spirit of the place." This was but one of many incongruities.

The festival was the inspiration of Anthony Branch, a wealthy Englishman who, for tax purposes, is currently enduring exile in Taos. As a young man at Cambridge, Branch had been exposed to F. R. Leavis's enthusiasm for Lawrence, and so when someone at Taos reminded him that 1980 would mark the fiftieth anniversary of the artist's death, it seemed to Branch a fortuitous occasion and place for a celebration. But what might have been the opportunity for an exploration of Lawrence's special hold on readers or even of his peculiar relationship to New Mexico and the New World quickly ballooned into a "festival"—with much of the circus quality that the word connotes. After all, the occasion could be no more than Branch's idea of it, which he disarmingly defined as "an excuse for a lot of very intelligent people to get together in a beautiful place."

There were certainly a lot of them, although whether the adjective intelligent could be stretched to cover them all is not so clear. Fiedler, Nichols, Margaret Drabble, Allen Ginsberg, Robert Duncan, Derek Walcott, Edward Albee, James Leo Herlihy, A. Alvarez, Thom Gunn, Stephen Spender, Harry T. Moore, Scott Momaday, Thomas Sanchez, Richard Hoggart, Blanche Gelfant and others—these were representatives from the world of letters. To them were added Elizabeth Taylor, Tony Randall, Dean Stockwell, Eva Marie Saint, Richard Crenna, Diana Rigg, E. G. Marshall, Julie Harris, Anne Baxter, Trevor Howard, Tony Church and Ian McKellen from the more accessible world of entertainment. Alan Bates and Rock Hudson were supposed to attend but had conflicting commitments. Dennis Hopper, who until recently has been running his own sort of circus in Mabel Dodge Luhan's former home, didn't show up. Jonathan Winters got himself uninvited by promising an improvised sketch of Lawrence as he would have been seen by an Indian. And of all these stars of entertainment only McKellen had any germane reason for attending, having just finished a film based on Harry T. Moore's standard Lawrence biography.

Naturally, with such high-priced talent, the tariff had to be steep: $100 for the four days of meetings, $10 for a costume ball at the Luhan house, plus $25 or $50 more if you wanted to attend the concluding event, a "Gala Recital" at the Institute of American Indian Arts in Santa Fe.

The meetings followed the traditional paper-and-panel format and began with Fiedler, the Tyll Eulenspiegel of American letters, teasing the audience. This was also the last meeting in which the floor was opened to general discussion, for after Fiedler and his somewhat daunted panel had concluded their business by agreeing that really Lawrence had not had much influence on modern fiction, a young man in the audience arose with an impassioned twenty-minute question and was followed by two women who confessed they'd read Lawrence while in labor.

The confessional tone intensified in the group discussions that followed the general meetings. After some preliminary attempts to address the literary or social issues raised by Lawrence's work, the discussion leaders usually had to resign themselves to moderating their encounter groups. And perhaps this was the real reason why so many had paid to come here. For there can be very few writers who provoke such professions of love and intimate involvement from general readers; and, for that matter, even fewer who could figure as the subject of such a festival as this. Try to imagine, for example, a four day gathering in Arizona to honor Ibsen (and he has, it could easily be argued, as many claims to our respect and continuing interest as does Lawrence). And yet, as Lawrence's literary executor told us, this is but one of four Lawrence festivals this year and not even the biggest. It would have been interesting to hear Fiedler and some of the others on

Frederick Turner is author of the recent Beyond Geography: The Western Spirit Against the Wilderness *(Viking) and is at work on a biography of John Muir.*

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this subject. It would have been interesting also to have heard Drabble, Gelfant, Walcott, Momaday and Ginsberg discuss the relationship between Lawrence's continuing magnetism and his programmatic offenses against women, blacks, Indians, Jews and homosexuals.

As it was, the highlights had to be found elsewhere. There was the bus trip to the Taos shrine for a ceremony featuring dancing girls and a wait in line to enter the little building for a private moment with Lawrence's urn. On the return bus trip there was a peasants' revolt during which the hot and angry passengers demanded that they be allowed to attend the select cocktail party in Taos instead of being herded straight back to Santa Fe. There was a garden party and croquet match at The School of American Research in Santa Fe where, under the awnings, guests sipped champagne punch and nibbled watercress sandwiches and shrimp. Here the climax was the long-anticipated appearance of Elizabeth Taylor, who had last been seen several days before stepping into a white Lincoln Continental, the mystery of her subsequent whereabouts reminding some of *The Woman Who Rode Away.*

Finally, there was the Gala Recital, an evening affair at which the entertainers gave dramatic readings of various Lawrence works. When the logic of the selections faltered, a troupe of Indian dancers momentarily diverted us. Thea Musgrave presented the first and what we must hope (for her sake at least) will be the only performance of her "Last Twilight," a pathetic, melodramatic vehicle, faithful to the worst aspects of Lawrence and replete with apocalyptic chorus, dead Indians, homicidal cowboys, and Penitentes. Just about the only authentic note of the evening was sounded in Elizabeth Taylor's restrained and intelligent reading of Lawrence's "Mountain Lion." All this while above the bright stage there hung a banner bearing the brooding image of Lawrence; it flapped and swung in the New Mexico night as if in vivid reproach.

There was one more event, a midnight cocktail party for the scholars, writers and stars held at the home of a wealthy art dealer. There beneath the huge vigas and enormous paintings the select crowd hunted conversational hot spots. Robert Duncan slyly suggested that this was the only genuine event of the festival since the buffet available here was the only one that had proved worthy of him. Fritz Scholder was observed admiring a woman's grotesquely outsized turquoise ring. "Santo Domingo!" she screamed at him gleefuly. E. G. Marshall wandered conversationless through the vast salons, perhaps pondering the vagaries of a career that has come to include hawking laxatives on television. Dean Stockwell appeared in several different costumes as if trying to discover the real man inside them. Elizabeth Taylor did not appear at all.

At the ragged end of the evening a man paused at the buffet table to peer quizzically at a petite Indian woman who was gathering up the last of the pâté. "I've seen you somewhere before," he said slowly. "Oh yes," she replied. "I come into your home often. I deal in corn." It was the Mazola Margarine woman. □

Amazing Grace

PETER MARIN

CRY OF THE PEOPLE. *By Penny Lernoux. Doubleday and Company. 429 pp. $8.95.*

Between 1964 and 1978, according to Penny Lernoux, 978 priests, nuns and bishops of the Catholic Church were arrested throughout Latin America. Seventy-three were tortured, seventy-eight were killed and thirty-seven disappeared or were kidnapped. Although these figures constitute only a tiny fraction of the full number of dissidents who suffered similar fates in Latin America during the same period, they do reveal something about two processes now visible everywhere on the continent: first, the partial radicalization of the church and second, the increasingly repressive policies of Latin American regimes toward the church. Whether they are well-known bishops, like Helder Camara in Brazil, or anonymous priests organizing the local poor into *comunidades de base,* members of the clergy have grown increasingly open and vehement in their resistance to social injustice, and they have begun to pay a high price for their opposition.

If this phenomenon was not well known to most Americans before, the Pope's recent visits to Mexico and Latin America have focused attention upon it. But for most of us—especially those of us who accept secular reason and skepticism as the necessary basis for a free polis—the role of the church in social change remains alien, exotic and perhaps even suspect, and this is what makes Lernoux's new book so important. She manages to weave together for the lay reader several apparently disparate but politically significant themes: the suffering one finds everywhere on the Latin American continent and the brutality of its existing regimes; the role of United States policy (national, corporate, or banking) in the continued existence of those regimes; the radicalization of the church and attempts at its suppression, and, finally, the demands such conditions place upon those of us in the United States, especially upon those who are religious.

Lernoux writes about all this with intelligence and passion, and I want to make clear at the outset that I think her book is a powerful and important one. Behind her information there moves something even more compelling—her obvious sense of solidarity with those who suffer and her anger at those in the United States who remain oblivious to that suffering. One can sense throughout the work her intention to arouse our outrage and to impel us toward some kind of action. In focusing upon the achievements of radical priests and nuns, and on their suffering at the hands of various regimes that we in the United States support, she is clearly struggling to awaken the dormant consciences of many Americans.

No one who has spent time in Latin America can fault that as a strategy or fail to understand the sense of urgency behind it. Returning to the United States from Latin America these days one feels the way travelers must have felt returning from Germany in the 1930s. The suffering one has seen is impermissible; its connections with United

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State policies are evident and yet here at home nobody cares or knows what is going on. In the presence of a perpetual holocaust, one finds only ignorance and silence.

In that context, I am reluctant to fault any approach that promises to end such obliviousness, and yet as I read *Cry of the People* I began to feel increasingly uncomfortable. Throughout the book, Lernoux makes it sound as if the church has been in the forefront of the Latin American liberation movement. She creates the impression that the theology of liberation, and a politicized sense of Jesus' mission and words, can provide an adequate basis for widespread political action and substantive change.

Yet this, precisely, is what I doubt. Much of what we hear in the United States about the radical church is nonsense. Although I have not spent as much time in Latin America as Lernoux has, a good part of that time was spent with dissident peasant groups and radical members of the clergy, and her conclusions do not gibe with much of what I saw there myself.

It is doubtless true that members of the clergy risk their lives daily, struggling to bring about change at local levels. In some countries, as in Nicaragua, a few priests stand side by side with rebels or become genuine leaders of the people. But much of the opposition offered to brutal regimes is no more "radical" than centrist Democratic positions in the United States, and the reaction of local or national governments to the "radical" clergy is often only a brutal response to relatively mild criticism or action. I do not mean that these are not brave actions; often even mild criticism can put one's life in jeopardy. But it is one thing to applaud the clergy for bravery and another to find in their actions or theories a basis for genuine change. Even the great theorists of the movement, the theologians of "liberation," seem weak in this regard. Their attempts to ground radical social change in a revised but essentially fundamentalist rereading of Christ's words are often intellectually tortured and unconvincing, no matter how touching, and their programs for change, the "ideology" the Pope loves to decry, are hazy and generalized, in some ways totally unusable or inapplicable to the concrete situations one finds in Latin America.

Cry of the People seems somehow to reverse what appears to be the actual relation of the church to secular change. There are men and women I admire among the radical clergy, and some I love, but most of them would be the first to insist that the great heroes of change in Latin America have not been the members of the church. Long before the clergy's dissidence and persecution began, long before they spoke out, peasants and workers opposed oppressive regimes at local and national levels. It was their bravery, and the rough theories behind it, that preceded the radicalization of the church and inspired it. In city after city I visited in Latin America, the radicalized church members seemed still to be locked into worlds of their own, with almost no connections to the organized movements of less religious workers or peasants. They seemed on the periphery of social change rather than at its center, and they were far more effective in "leading" the same groups of marginal peasants and poor over whom they had always held sway than in making connections, as equals, with others struggling for change. I remember once visiting with a group of radical European Jesuits in Bogotá. They knew their Marx as well as they knew their Kierkegaard, Gutiérrez, or Kung, but when I asked them whether I might not sit down with them and a few local community leaders to discuss certain issues they were thrown into confusion until one of them finally suggested putting me in touch with the husband of one of their maids.

My reservations about these aspects of *Cry of the People* were compounded by something I find more difficult to articulate, a sort of coyness on Lernoux's part about her own attitudes toward the theology of liberation or the notion of a politics based upon Jesus' words. It is never clear whether she believes, as do most "radical" Catholics, in the divinity and superiority of their one particular truth. Toward the end of her book, for instance, in criticizing American Catholics, she writes: "Part of the problem, from the religious point of view, is that they have lost touch, in their language and concepts, with the biblical Christ." It is the phrase "from the religious point of view" that bothers me. Is it actually her *own* point of view? It *seems* at

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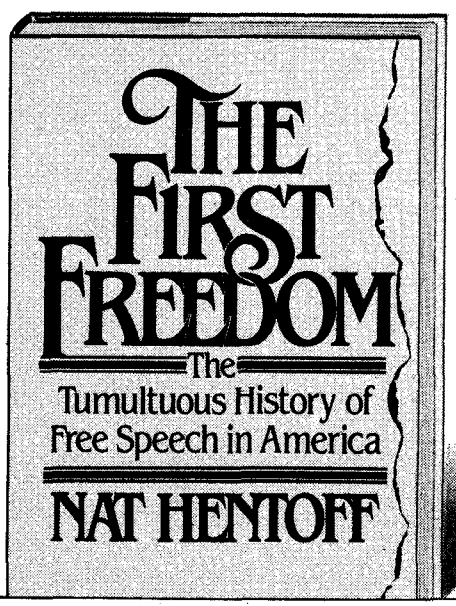

Martha Kaplan

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times as if it is, but if so, she has some explaining to do, for the idea that there is a single and unarguable biblical Christ, and that keeping in "touch" with Him will radically transform the mass of ordinary Catholics into social activists, must be argued more substantially than it is, or else it strikes one as a kind of whistling in the dark. It is the complicated sort of idea that requires either the skeptical examination one would expect from a nonbeliever or the passionate exposition of the true believer. The fact that we get neither vitiates the power of the book.

The issues involved here are serious ones. The relation of religious faith to secular life has again become one of the fundamental questions of our time. We long ago outlived the secular innocence of the Enlightenment. having discovered that the reason and worldly skepticism that were meant to liberate men from false authority can lead them to forms of enthusiasm, obedience, or violence even more devastating than the excesses of the church they left behind. We know now that men kill perhaps even more readily in God's absence than they did in His name. And millions of people throughout the world are encouraged once more to find in transcendental values and organized religion a ground for the morality they miss in civic life. One can see the worst aspects of this impulse in the right-wing attempts in the United States to suppress free choice in the name of received truth; and one can see—*perhaps*—its best aspects in Latin America, where bravery and generosity rather than angry intolerance are what issue, in part, from faith.

But will that always be the case? Can one miraculously introduce into the polis the best aspects of an institutionally preserved faith without their being accompanied by the worst? Can one really locate, in a hierarchical church that claims an exclusionary truth, an ethic sufficient for social change and free political life? Frankly, the sight of millions of Latin Americans trampling one another for a look at the Pope, still bound by myth and superstition to an institution run by men intent upon keeping them in thrall, does not much lift my skeptical heart, even when the Pope talks to his followers about social justice. Perhaps the reason I am less sanguine about it than Lernoux is that I am Jewish and she is not, but there are Catholic observers who do not share Lernoux's uncritical opinion of the Pontiff's pronouncements—Coleman McCarthy, for example, in his newspaper columns, or Harvey Cox in *The Michigan Quarterly*. They too have the uncomfortable feeling that the apparent "liberalization" of church policy, which Lernoux accepts without question, does not yet mean for its members the kinds of free thought or the sense of fallibility and humility that most of us accept as necessary for a community of free equals.

And yet, having said all this, I find myself uncomfortable with it. The crisis in Latin America is so severe, the suffering so great, and Lernoux's work so passionately useful that I do not want to say anything that might detract from its impact. The first steps toward changing attitudes in the United States about Latin America involve, as she knows, both knowledge and contact—the willingness of those in the United States to learn about Latin America, and to face those whose destinies depend in part upon our nation's policies.

Penny Lernoux may be right in thinking that concerns based on shared spiritual belief can be used to create feelings of reciprocity and responsibility where they do not yet exist, and for that reason it may be premature to complain about the limits of such an approach long before it has really been tried. But I cannot help thinking that for all of the service she has done us, she might have done us a greater service still by seriously exploring the limits and ambiguities of such an approach as well as its virtues. □

The Starting Place

MICHAEL ZUCKERMAN

SMALL TOWN AMERICA: A Narrative History, 1620-The Present. *By Richard Lingeman. G. P. Putnam's Sons. 800 pp. $16.95.*

Better than half a century ago, Thorstein Veblen called the country town the most essential of American institutions "in shaping public sentiment and giving character to American culture." Yet, to this day, we have hardly gone beyond his classic essay in comprehending the town's sway over our manners and morals. The distance that is supposed to lend perspective has not brought us notably closer to such understanding, and on just that account we may even suspect that the town's dominion is still not done. In any case, we have never had a satisfactory synthetic history of small-town life, and we do not have it in Richard Lingeman's *Small Town America* either.

We have, instead, an account that invites our reflection on the conundrums of community in a nation impelled, as Veblen said, by "self-help and cupidity." For Lingeman's sprawling synthesis is now the most ambitious one extant. In its very sweep, it evokes the puzzles it often does not struggle with.

Ranging over the covenanted communities of early New England, the speculative promotions of the trans-Appalachian frontier, the mining camps and cattle towns of the Wild West and the prairie junctions of the plains, Lingeman surveys the successive settlement forms that subdued the continent. Idealizing the dominion of the town at the end of the nineteenth century, he details the decline of its influence over the course of the next seventy-five years. But for all the pages he devotes to all these aspects of the past, Lingeman never allows his history to intrude importantly on his conceptions of those little communities. His concern is with the residues of the towns in the American mind, not with their realities on the ground. From his first sentence, he deals in "memory" more than in anything substantial. To his last line, he dwells on "dreams" more than on anything mundane.

In a way, this is just as well. Dreams do not demand consistency, and Lingeman is not a man to be daunted by that hobgoblin. But in another way, it is not so well at all. Dreams do bid interpretation, and Lingeman does not provide much. Amid a multitude of contradictory images, he simply reports all he can retrieve.

In the New England towns of the colonial era, for example, he sees, among

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other modes, theocracy, "aristocracy of sorts," "tyranny of the majority" and a "seedbed of democracy." He discerns deference to authority "firmly grounded in the admonition to obey," "resentment" of authority rooted in a "cantankerous" insistence on rights, and provisional submission avid always for the opportunity to advance to supremacy. He discovers "stable, conservative, conformist" communities and unruly arenas for the restless energies of "shrewd, acquisitive, and individualistic" inhabitants.

In the pioneer towns of the nineteenth century, he finds a steadfast lawfulness, an intransigent lawlessness and an obdurate litigiousness. He depicts a population living in conditions of "full equality," discloses its propensity for "conspicuous display" and concedes indeed its "penchant for titles." He declares "social distinctions . . . nonexistent" and describes villages divided "half-Gomorrah and half-Methodist" where the dead were buried in religiously segregated cemeteries. He affirms ideals of "reciprocal help" and recognizes "ruling virtues" of egoistic ambition. He catches the repressiveness that required "emotional catharsis" in camp-meeting religion and acknowledges the everyday disinhibition that inhered in "naked individualism." He believes the new towns of the nineteenth century played a "conservative, stabilizing" role and knows that they released the "volatile energies" of a "heterogeneous stream" of promoters and opportunists.

Lingeman never really wrestles with these incongruities or with a myriad of others that clutter his account. He simply heaps his separate insights high and retrieves whatever he needs whenever he needs it from the pile. And because he does, he misses most of the more intriguing problems that his own materials pose.

He sees, for instance, the incessant mobility of the inhabitants of the towns. Pioneering, as he grants, "encouraged a transient population." But he never quite sees that such roiling migration might actually have affected towns and townspeople. On the contrary, he discounts it by fiat, on the convenient assumption that town life entailed "a kind of postpioneer personality," and recurs repeatedly thereafter to an image of the typical town as "a coherent society" composed of "people whom you had known all your life" and who "knew you in turn."

In so doing, he ignores more than a mounting mass of scholarship suggesting that geographic mobility never slowed perceptibly in postpioneer days. He ignores also his own awareness that "people came and went" unremittingly and his own evidence that their movement was undiminished with time. The very novelists on whose fictions and depictions he depends for so many of his notions of the town at its turn-of-the-century apotheosis confuted by their lives the closeness he claims. One after another, they were "rootless," born of "restless wandering," their histories always, as Hamlin Garland observed, "a hymn of fugitives." And in ignoring all that, Lingeman precludes his own consideration of a fascinating issue. For though it is clear that towns could never have been bound by the immobile fellowship he postulates, it is not at all so clear that they could not have been coherent communities anyway. Social structures and normative patterns seem to have held with remarkable persistence in nineteenth-century places that experienced a churning turnover of personnel, and an understanding of American development would seem to require some sense of how they did so.

Other dilemmas are implicit in other difficulties Lingeman does not address. They emerge amid his ad hoc judgments, and taken together they constitute a considerable agenda for curiosity about the course of our communal life.

If, for instance, "the American farmer came to prefer the system of owning and working his own parcel of land, individually," it might be worth wondering how a nation of towns arose out of such material. If "something in the American character . . . demanded the West"—if a "restless itch" and a "lack of laws or customs fixing him to a place" allowed the American "to strive to become whatever he dreamed of becoming"—it might be important to ponder how even to write about the hometowns of the homeless.

If, from the time of the earliest New England towns, men who found the limits of their locality "no longer endurable" hived off only to create new towns "little different from the ones

The war of words. Third world spokesmen denounce the international news media as a tool of cultural imperialism. They charge that Western news agencies misrepresent the affairs of developing countries, damaging their economic interests and imposing on them the perspectives of wealthy exploiting nations. Smith examines all sides of this important debate and assesses proposed resolutions of the conflict.

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they had left," and if, through the nineteenth century, men who chafed at the constraints of older settlements went west only to establish towns that "turned out to resemble nothing so much as the towns of the East and Middle West from which they came," it might be urgent to understand why the pioneers so steadily replicated in new lands the milieus from which they "escaped with relief and loathing."

If none but the towns founded by religious groups had "any semblance of a unifying vision" or "any sense of community purpose or aspiration," and if those very towns "foundered" while others based on fraud, speculation and puffery for the sake of profit flourished, it might be essential to explore the appropriateness to America of categories of community that accord only the deviant and the defeated a sense of community.

But Lingeman rarely explores or integrates his most suggestive judgments. The result is a rambling replication of, rather than a sustained rumination on, the towns' own embattled estimates of themselves. Villages appear as refuges from "a hostile world" of "predatory amoral competition" a dozen pages after they are presented as "real estate 'propositions' " populated by exploited rubes and collusive merchants extorting "the maximum overcharge possible." They provide a "warm womb" where the "battered soul from the city" may be "therapeutically bathed in love, fellowship, and egalitarian acceptance" a dozen paragraphs after they afford a soulless site for "insecurity," "rugged individualism" and "social snobbery."

In retailing rather than resolving these contradictions, Lingeman mystifies matters we still need to fathom for ourselves. And in composing a chronicle heedless of the very history it exhibits, he denies himself the resources requisite to a consequential connection of past and present. For when he turns to the towns of the twentieth century, he turns to them in terms of a conventional wisdom indifferent to the data of his own account of earlier communities. He sets a "sense of belonging" in the towns against a "synthetic community" in the cities as though the impositions of the "ruling minority" of Puritans on their fellows had not been as synthetic in the seventeenth century, and boosterism and obligatory egalitarianism in the nineteenth. He marks the entrance of commercial "Main Street into the mainstream" in the 1920s as though townsfolk had not been immersed from the first in complex currents of international Protestantism and the world market. He discovers an unprecedented local dependence on cosmopolitan capital and technology in our time as though the commercial seats of the Old Northwest had not been utterly at external mercies in their reliance on the railroads, and as though the cow towns, mining camps and prairie villages had not literally been birthed by outside capital and advanced technology.

These failures of memory are the more unfortunate because they taint the intriguingly original thrust of the book. In his last chapter, Lingeman suggests that the small town may yet reclaim its accustomed significance. As he interprets recent survey data, Americans are beginning to be drawn once more to the human scale of the village. As he reads recent census evidence, they are already finding the "way of life" of the town an "attractive alternative" to the overcrowded impersonality of the metropolis.

But to reach such readings, Lingeman must misread the rest of his own account. For on the very history he holds forth, the town has never represented an alternative to the city so much as an anticipation of it. His villages never valued smallness for its own sake. Their ambitions were always expansive and their visions consistently grand. If they did not develop into great urban centers, it was rarely for lack of trying. As Sinclair Lewis saw, "Every small American town is trying to get population and modern ideals. . . . You don't want to look just at what these small towns are, you want to look at what they're aiming to become."

Contemporary social critics may be coming to believe that small is beautiful, but town promoters never did. Their enterprises were failed big cities, small by default more than by design, and quite incompetent to offer the nation a distinctive way of life. So far from affirming an authentic attachment to tradition, they have always been "obsessed with the new." So far from

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showing a convincing self-determination, they have always depended on forces from far beyond their borders. So far from putting a premium on the personal, they have always preferred the external and the economic. And indeed they still do. In a nation in which polls show striking majorities for environmental enhancement even at the expense of jobs, townspeople overwhelmingly prefer polluting industries to the protection of their own purlieus. In a nation in which many are beginning to wonder, townspeople remain convinced that "you can't stop Progress." For, as Lingeman concedes, "pocketbook issues" are "preeminent" in small towns, and "the social-welfare ethic weak." Petty-capitalist priorities prevail handily, as they always have, over care for neighbors and the neighborhood.

In the end, Lingeman seems to see as much. In an affecting epilogue, he recounts a personal pilgrimage to the native places of some writers who told stories of country towns. Launching his trip in some apprehension that his "elaborate route over many miles in search of some starting point" might merely "bring him back to an already known," he retraces the recognitions already tacit in the body of the book.

In Sinclair Lewis's Sauk Centre, he confronts not only the invincible acquisitiveness of the small town—Sauk Centre has converted every relic of its fiercest critic into a tourist attraction—but also the doom of his dream of rootedness. In the cemetery east of town, he gives up his search for Lewis's burial marker because, "somehow, it didn't seem to matter."

In Ed Howe's Bethany, he discovers a town that has forgotten its most famous son as utterly as Sauk Centre has commercialized its. And as he pores over an 1863 newspaper in the local library, he ponders on the "boredom and spite" and "festering irrationality" from which Howe fled.

In Edgar Lee Masters's family residence by the Spoon River, he comes upon a scrapbook clipping of the local notice of the poet's funeral, "rejecting him even in death." And he comes as well upon another clipping of Masters's sentimental insistence, in a speech late in life to a local club, that "no matter where life has taken me, my heart has remained here." Beyond rejection, beyond wandering, small-town Americans have stayed at home in their hearts because there has been no other place to go anyway. In a civilization shaped by small towns, the next place you come to resembles nothing so much as the one you left behind.

And yet, the young men and women have always left. In Sherwood Anderson's Clyde, Lingeman listens to a distant train whistle in the night and knows it for a "plangent small-town sound." He imagines "Clyde's heyday" and identifies it with "the trains arriving and leaving." In a vivid parting image, he muses upon that town, that railroad station, that "train setting off with a young man," and he sees that the town can be but "a starting place . . . always there behind us, in memory." Indeed, he sees more, that that memory itself "decomposes into the bright dust of dreams."

It is, in a way, his concession that he cannot see the town as it is, or was. The decomposition of the past precludes self-knowledge and leaves him, as it has left so many before him, with a sense of antecedents as gauzy and incoherent as a dream. And in the end his defeat is ours as well, for the history he sought is our own. We know ourselves no better for this book than did the men and women he describes, who left their native towns but never caught up with their inchoate yearnings. □

Ghostly Satire

ROSS C. MURFIN

DINGLEY FALLS. *By Michael Malone. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. 540 pp. $12.95.*

Dingley Falls, Michael Malone's novel about a fateful week in the life of a small, self-congratulatory Connecticut town, deserves to remain a part of our literary landscape. Highly traditional in some ways, it nevertheless employs an unusually large range of tones and styles and gathers together an astonishing crowd of fifty-some characters who live in Dingley Falls and whose lives are being imperiled by seven others who do not.

On the first page of the novel, we are introduced to Judith Haig, who fears packs of dogs and her own mysteriously failing heart. On the second page we catch a glimpse of Winslow Abernathy, whose wife is about to discover love with a poet named Rage, and on the third we hear about Priss Ransom, who has painted the shutters of her Federalist home orange in a defiant act of "defining herself." Still more characters appear until there is something ominous about the sheer numbers of people coming out of the wainscoting in the first bright, sunlit chapters of this novel.

When townspeople start dying, we know that the fall of Beanie Abernathy, who "taste[s] the fruit" of illicit sex until she is "driven from the Garden" by inclement weather, is not to blame. Nor is the anonymous local author of obscene messages. The source of darkness seems to have something to do with a sterile black spot in the nearby countryside that "did not look like land cleared by fire . . . but like land annihilated forever."

Ross C. Murfin, associate professor of English at Yale, is the author of Swinburne, Hardy, Lawrence and the Burden of Belief *(University of Chicago Press).*

A STUDIED MADNESS

Heywood Hale Broun. Second Chance Press. In 1965 'Heywood Hale Broun was a relatively obscure charactor actor & his brilliantly reviewed memoir was also relegated to a similar obscurity. With the calculated self-mockery "that actors hope will pass for charm," Broun has called his book "the story of warmly American Odyssey which took a knight in shining greasepaint from the barns of summer stock to the stage of Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall." The New York Times called it a "light hearted & totally irreverent once over of the theatre." Harriet Van Horne wrote that it was "As sharp & true as a surgical incision. It's also marvelously funny." The St. Louis Globe Democrat quote was "Mellifluous memoirs, sparkling & erudite." Richard Watts Jr. claimed that it is "One of the most engaging books by an actor I've ever read." And John Chapman said "A favorite in my house because of its wit, warmth & the stories it tells."

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It hardly matters that, for a dozen or so chapters, Malone leaves the route to understanding his mystery as undeveloped as the Federal highway near Dingley Falls that was discontinued half a mile from where it was begun (and just short of the blackened wasteland). It doesn't matter because much that is revealed in the meantime seems even more pertinent. Encounters between checkout women and policemen's wives at the local A.&P. speak with a discomforting kind of eloquence about the uncertain condition of life in Everytown:

> "Who what?" clacked Sarah as she shoveled an armful of cans to the bagboy. . . . *"Maynard Henry.* He caught Raoul Treeca trying to run off with his wife, with Chinkie. Chin. The Saigon girl that the Grabaski cousins, you know, brought back from Vietnam last year and set up in that trailer where they took turns with her or all went in together for all I know. We'll never get the nitty gritty on that one. . . ."
>
> "That's all," said Judith palely. . . . It was, in fact, too much. She remembered pictures. A highway of black-hatted bodies running in slow motion, like *Fantasia* mushrooms afloat in a flooded river.

Because of the manner in which the author eventually diagnoses the cause of the town's heart failure, his novel ends by being effective social satire as well as dark human comedy. *Dingley Falls*, which sometimes reads like the work of a New England Faulkner and at other times reminds us of *Catch-22* or even *V.*, ultimately owes more to Dickens than to any single American novelist. Malone's epigraph is taken from *Great Expectations*, but the vision of life he offers, however, has more in common with *Bleak House*, a novel that successfully combines satire and a ghost's walk, apocalyptic fire and scenes of life. □

FILMS

ROBERT HATCH

Jun
The Getting of Wisdom

Jun, an unpretentious picture with a less than memorable title, may not receive the attention it deserves in these hot weeks of loud-mouthed entertainment. It is a first film, written and directed by Hiroto Yokoyama, and if it has faults of inexperience, it has the virtues of honest intention and acute observation.

Jun (Jun Eto) is a youth from the worked-out coal-mining region of northern Kyoto, now completing his apprenticeship in a Tokyo machine shop. He has a girlfriend named Yoko (Mayumi Asaka), but he also aspires to become a comic-strip artist and to that end has entered some drawings in a big-money contest. Caught between the reality of his humdrum job and a dream of fame and riches, and held back by unresolved ties to his childhood, he keeps his gentle sweetheart at arm's length, fearing the responsibilities of an acknowledged relationship.

Meanwhile, irresolute, restive and morose, Jun has become a groper of women in the crowded commuter trains of Tokyo. This mean addiction shames him, but supplies a sense of power, the spice of danger and a measure of sadistic revenge for the exasperating fix in which he finds himself. Judging from Yokoyama's movie, the molesting of women is an acute problem in Tokyo's public transportation system. The questing hands seem to be everywhere, their quarries enduring the affront in mute misery or accepting it with what seems to be starved enjoyment. Jun is chased by the large and furious companion of one of his victims; on another train he is grabbed by police spotters, but is let go because the woman asserts that no offense occurred. It is a funny scene in a grim way, with the intended plaintiff denouncing the officers for their dirty minds, and their out-of-countenance reactions suggesting that she is not entirely wide of the mark.

Soon after this episode, the young man travels north to visit his birthplace. It is an island off the coast, densely covered with the structures of an abandoned ironworks and looking like a huge, derelict dreadnought from some long-forgotten war. This eerie place has been darting into Jun's mind from the start of the film, and he has returned there to honor his father's grave. He is unable to find it among the ruins and casts his offering of flowers into the sea. On the train back to the city, he begins to fondle the woman in the seat next to him, and she, turning the tables, reacts with a passion that unnerves him. Back in Tokyo, he discovers Yoko sleeping in his room and joins her in the bed. He has been shocked out of his somnambulistic eroticism; he has learned by then

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that he is no prize-winning cartoonist; he has paid his filial duty as best he can, and is out of the limbo between past and future.

Yokoyama's portrait of this difficult, appealing young man is drawn with expert economy and ample depth. All the characters, even quite minor ones, have substance. The background of Tokyo's neon neighborhoods of bars, eateries and game rooms is eloquently shoddy and makes the more touching the sort of solid relationship that Jun and his girl evidently intend for themselves. The film is a compassionate, somewhat sad look into the lives of very vulnerable people in a noisy, swaggering society. This last may be what the director means to imply by the blurred, black-and-white scenes of urban turmoil that pass through Jun's mind in moments of stress, but I found the imagery ambiguous and a distraction from the simple clarity of the tale. Also, the picture was a little marred for me by the use of strident electronic sound, intended to underline the emotional passages but managing instead to compete with them. These, however, are details. *Jun* is a story deeply felt and cogently told by a director who has himself recently completed his apprenticeship.

Bruce Beresford's *The Getting of Wisdom* can scarcely escape comparison with Gilliam Armstrong's *My Brilliant Career,* that other movie about an Australian girlhood at the turn of the century, released here last winter. Both are based on autobiographical novels by women who wrote under masculine pseudonyms (Henry Handel Richardson, in the case of *The Getting of Wisdom)* and both recall the late adolescent experiences and aspirations of heroines who, by asserting strong wills and applying distinct talents, break out of their rural backgrounds. When last seen, each is about to launch herself into the adult world.

Both films are also naïve, but *My Brilliant Career* prevails against its rather old-fashioned pendulum of joy and sorrow through the presence of the eager, outgoing, humorous, but withal tough-minded Sybylla Melvyn, as played by Judy Davis. Beresford has not been as successful with his young actress, Susannah Fowle. As Laura Rambotham, daughter of a village postmistress and now enrolled in a finishing school modeled on rumors of English social graces, she also is intended to seem enterprising, exuberant, variously talented and appealing. But the director and actress have not discovered how to derive these virtues from within the character; Laura's excellence seems rather to be demonstrated by set pieces got up for the purpose—a bit of virtuoso piano playing, a few lines of Latin, an inappropriately erotic passage memorized from the Bible, a spurious flirtation with the presiding clergyman. These are more feats of acrobatics than development of personality, and there remains a cold stillness about the girl suggesting that what she is acquiring is less wisdom than a knowledge of how to get along in the world.

That would all be very well—a Becky Sharp from down under—except that she makes her way against a company composed almost entirely of stereotypes and the simple-minded. The headmistress is a dragon; her assistant is a jelly doughnut; the clergyman carries selfish vanity to the point of eccentricity, and the student body displays a routine bitchiness that withers in the glare of Rambotham ego. We're left in the end with a packet of quaint postcards, each of them dominated by the pretty but rather inexpressive face of the heroine. □

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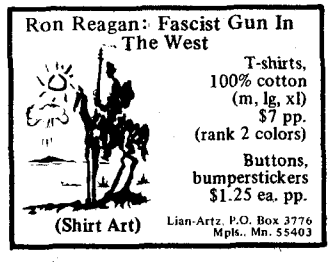
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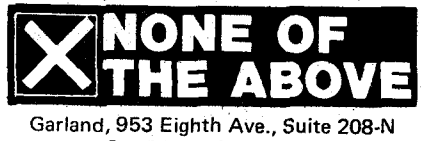

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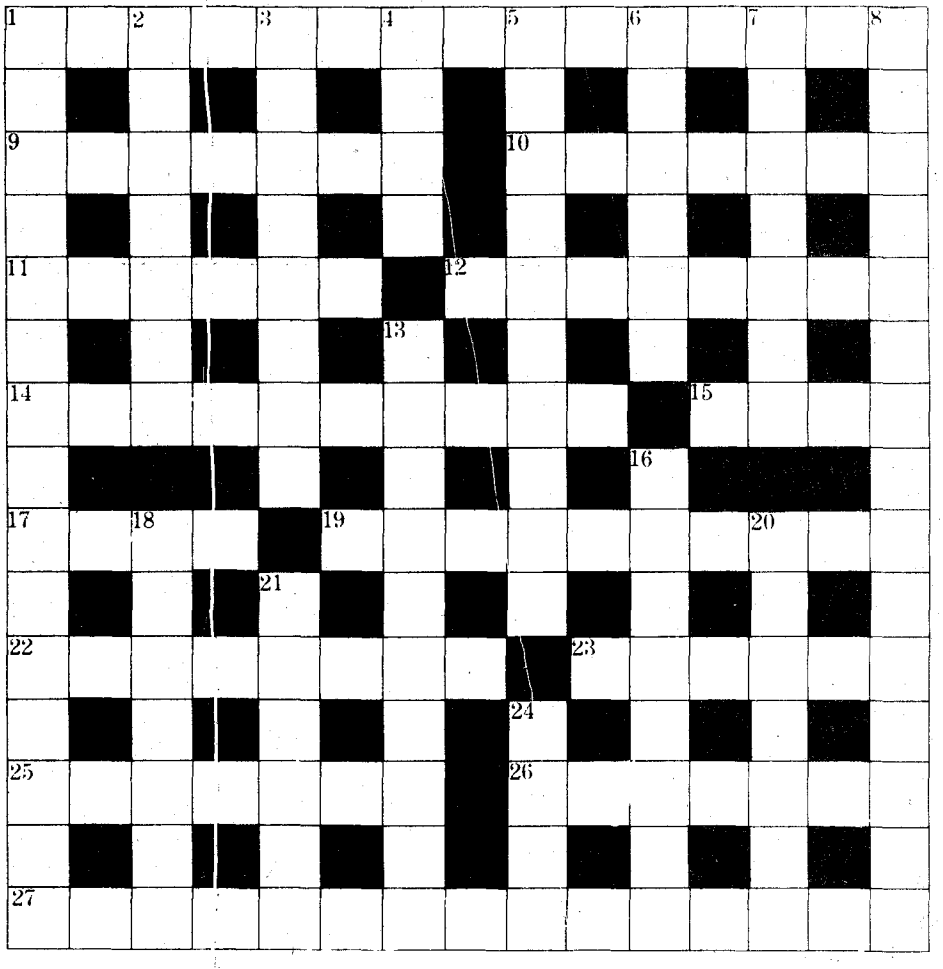

ACROSS

1 Is that what the singer of "Show Me the Way to Go Home" is hoping to be? (Might help quick pick-up, with working transmission.) (9,6)
9 A rambler during the Jazz Age? (Must get around the old boat when it returns!) (7)
10 Well-known state of the last beach? Quite the reverse! (7)
11 How piano-players perform? (6)
12 Miller's melting point? (8)
14 Not well set-up, like a college—though you shouldn't believe such a remark. (3-7)
15 To be one of the most common ones? (4)
17 Help to a famous work, or a famous mountain. (4)
19 Actions that are 14 shouldn't be. (We trust our borders are.) (10)
22 Previous state, in iron. (8)
23 Put two and two together and take one to court, shortly—one has a bad habit! (6)
25 In such a state, finally a brave beginning . . . (7)
26 . . . but just a pretense of courage. (7)
27 Given a little fellow, Procrustes might—but one could take a walk if one wants to. (7,4,4)

DOWN

1 Under which the Astros play with less than a hundred in the management team, taking on fancy poses as home-grown problems. (8,7)
2 Ruffled fur lets you get tranquil, strangely enough. (7)
3 One might put in a ringer for a job here. (8)
4 I start to bring it up with a very little bit. (4)
5 At this point, if at all, new on Rover, possibly. (3,2,5)
6 The delightful state of a Sherwood character? (6)
7 Babies might, but others should do it only in court. (7)
8 To bring up a thing is no different! (One doesn't agree to do it.) (5,10)
13 It makes the Dean run, but certainly not up here. (10)
16 Certainly not spanking machines found in the Crusades! (4,4)
18 One who scoffs at a leftist rising, with what some go along for, inside. (7)
20 Prison drink, in part of the army. (7)
21 Silver has, in all solemnity, to be what we are at its price. (6)
24 Be up on black, poetically. (4)

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ACROSS: 1 Autonomy; 5 Artful; 9 Trained; 10 Antonym; 11 Missent; 12 Taurine; 13 Minimum charge; 15 Satisfactions; 21 Tonneau; 22 Clabber; 23 Ragtime; 24 Leisure; 25 Carafe; 26 By-passes. DOWN: 1 Autumn; 2 Transom; 3 Nankeen; 4 Made to measure; 6 Retouch; 7 Fancier; 8 Lumbered; 10 Automatically; 14 Esoteric; 16 Tanager; 17 Sheriff; 18 Ocarina; 19 Subdues; 20 Orders.

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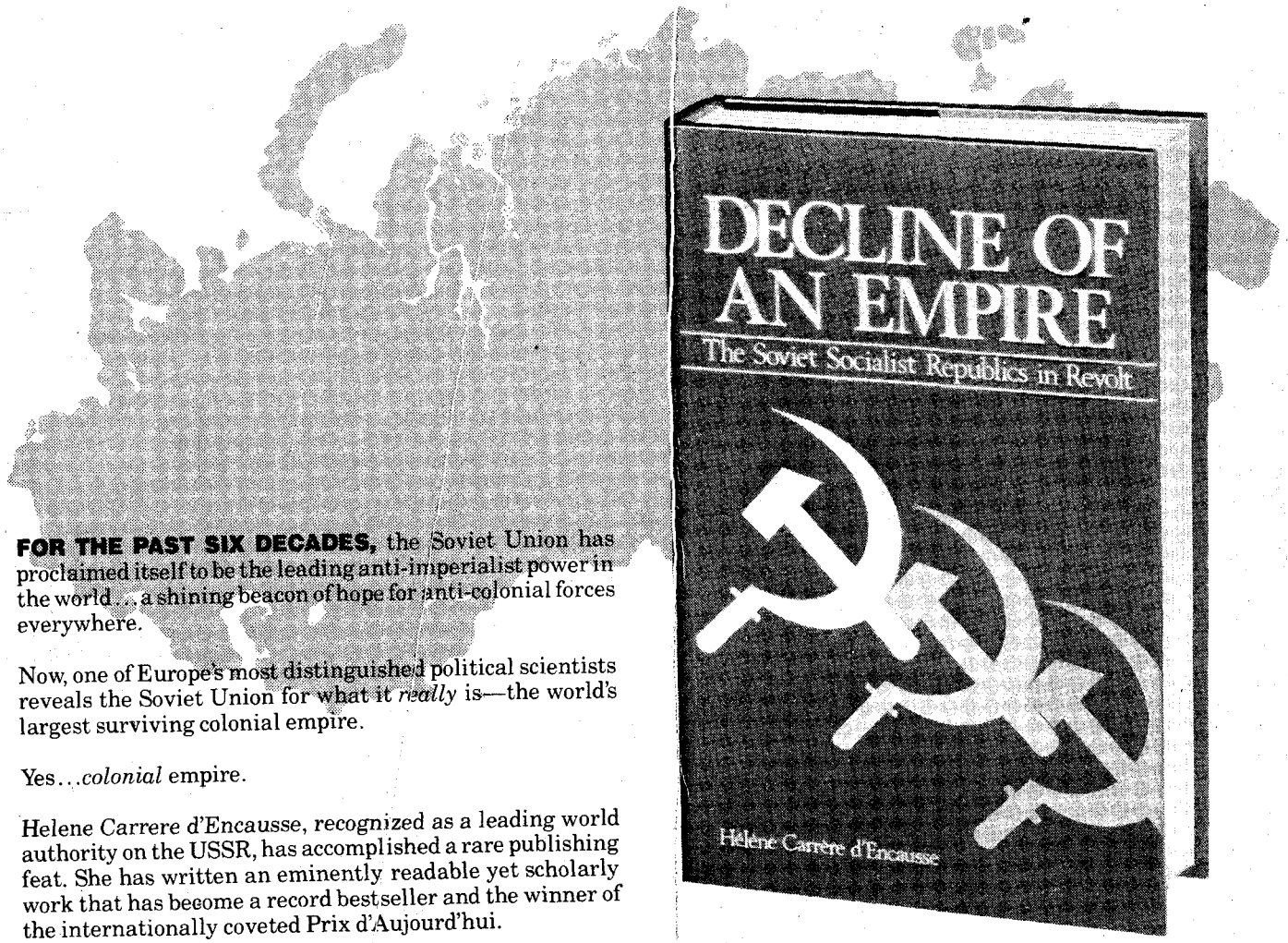

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